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The living Christ : a book of sermons

THE LIVING CHRIST

THE LIVING CHRIST

A Book of Sermons

By

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Compiled and Edited

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This Volume Is Affectionately Dedicated

To

That Fellowship of Believers

Who

Sat with Gladness at the Feet

Of Him

Who Bore Such Potent Witness to the Living Christ;

And by His Utterances

Were

Directed, Comforted, and Inspired

In Their

Christian Life and Service

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PREFACE

Since my induction as pastor of Salem Church, Lebanon, there have come to me requests from many sources that I should preserve for the Church some of the sermons preached by my sainted predecessor, who was unquestionably one of the greatest pulpit orators of his day, and whose utterances ever stirred and edified the souls of those who heard him. This book is an answer to these requests.

Its title is indicative of the perspective I had in mind in selecting these sermons. It is also expressive of the motive and underlying thought in all of Dr. Schmauk's preaching. In his work in the pulpit he regarded it his greatest privilege and his most sacred responsibility to present to his hearers the person and work of Christ in their practical bearing upon the life and thought of the believer. While I must confess to a somewhat limited acquaintance with the world's sermonic literature, I would nevertheless bear witness to the fact that I have found no discourses more Christocentric in thought or purpose than those of Dr. Schmauk.

It should be remembered that these sermons were not written to be published but to be preached. Their author was seeking through them to impress the heart rather than the intellect. Had he known that they were to appear in print he would have revised and polished them until they would have glowed and sparkled with the same brilliancy that characterizes his other literary productions.

It should also be remembered that Dr. Schmauk always conformed his utterances to the character of his audience.

The majority of these discourses were delivered before a mixed congregation the greater portion of which could be more easily moved and led by the truth in its simplicity than by close argument or profound scholarship.

It should be stated further that some of these sermons were exceedingly lengthy and others were rather incomplete, so that I have used the editor's privilege of condensing or elaborating with considerable freedom.

With these few words of explanation I am sending forth this little volume in the hope that it will perpetuate the memory of a beloved pastor, a potent preacher, and a mighty leader, and with the prayer that the messages it contains may lead all who read them into closer communion with Him who became Incarnate in order that we might have Life and have it more abundantly.

A. Chas. R. Keiter.

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I

THE WAY, THE TRUTH, AND THE LIFE

> "Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." John 14:6.

In these words Jesus proposes Himself as the solution of the problems of humanity: as the key to our doing, our thinking and our living: as the source of our program, the Way; of our insight, the Truth; and of our energy, the Life.

1. Look for a moment at the comprehensiveness of this utterance. Upward, it opens the mystery of God. Downward, it puts Jesus in relation to creation, history, reason, providence, prophecy and revelation. He is our solution of the cosmic problem. He is the source of the three great entities,—truth, life, and form. In creation Truth is ensouled by life, while Life seeks expression through form. He is the Way, and all history His mirror. He is the Truth, and the interpreter of thought. He is the Life, the incarnation of that faith, that freedom, that fidelity in love, that hope, that joy, that peace, that righteousness of character, and that culmination of selfhood which lifts to perfection.

But He is the root of man's innermost spiritual personality. Jesus is the solution not only of the world as made; He is also the solution of the world as it is to be won back to God. The cross has reconstructed the principles of society, and the agencies which Jesus has set in motion in His Church are not to remain apart from the world, but to impregnate it in endless ways. His Church,

on which He pours out His Spirit, is the unfolding of those potencies that in their great manifestations of personality, doctrine and deed, interpenetrate in Him.

In Him the perfect social principle, vitalized in the communion of saints, becomes visible. From Him flows that living word of the Spirit which touches us at every point, and lifts us to the broad freedom of finality. Comprehensive as to Nature and as to Grace, it is also comprehensive as to progress. It covers every department of human uplift. Our Lord combines in Himself the three indispensables of every quest, a destination, a resource and a route; an object, a means, and a method. There is no advance possible without aim, energy and plan. As our Prophet, or the Truth; as our Priest, or the Life; and as our King, or the Leader, He is the consummation of all three.

All the world is busy setting a goal. All the world is busy gathering power. All the world is seeking a way. More so today than ever before, the world is concerned with the way to prosperity, freedom, arbitration, labor and monopoly restriction; the way to longevity, sanitation, inoculation, elimination, restoration, eugenics; the way to co-operation, invention, economics and education. In this sense, all education is but the Way,—the way for the rising generation,—the way to fix the goal, to acquire resources, to build and run upon the road of life. But the world filled with ideas and dreams, has no worthy and final goal. Christ points out to us such a goal. Through Him we reach our ultimate—the Father. Without Him humanity has no goal, no resources, no road; and the upward development of life, the ascent of man, and the progress of the world is a myth. Jesus says, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no man hath access to the Father but by ME."

2. So much for the comprehensiveness of the text. Let us look now at its environment. Christ's incarnation was culminating. His preparatory work as Prophet was done. His work as Priest was at hand. His immortal Kingship was about to be begun. He tried to teach His embryonic Church the goal. But Thomas, the exact and unimaginative man of earth, could not comprehend. He said, "Lord, we know not the whither; so how can we know the way?" This is the high-water mark in honest, non-speculative science. Earth knows not its goal, and how can it determine the way? Into and across this uncertainty Christ plants His personality. He says, "I came from the Head. I go to the Head. I am here for you. I am your road to the Ultimate. I am the Truth from above, shining. I am the Life from above, Living. I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life."

What Christ offered to Thomas He offers to the world in all ages—the solution of the problem of Human Life. The world, like Thomas, is in a daze. Mystery deepens with every age. But our Christ is the "contemporary of all the ages," and He points toward the Father as the center toward which the currents of life, of thought, and of history must be set. It is to the Father that Christ is the Way. And He is the Way by being the Truth, and the Life.

I. *First of all, He is the Way.*

Every great way is a line of progress, gathering together the substance of a great area for transportation in a given direction. It is the immediate avenue of rescue and the pathway to a goal. It minimizes distance, provides access between two realms that have hitherto been separated, overcomes impossibilities of height or depth and carries the traveler safely to his destination. A way need not be broad,

nor conform to the region it traverses. The Brooklyn Bridge gathers a vast population from a fan-like area and conveys it under the very shadow of City Hall in New York. Similarly Christ is the Way which God has built to heaven, on which the feet of earth's multitudes who entrust themselves to it pass directly over all impossibilities, through all swamps and deadly rivers of guilt, directly into the Father's presence. Here is the greatest engineering feat of all time,—the effort of the Almighty to bridge the great gulf between a perishing world and Himself. He guides personality to Himself, through personality. The Way He provides is built from heaven downward, not from earth upward, as the poor evolutionist would have us believe. It is not a piece of celestial mechanics, or a climbing tower of human righteousness, but a living incarnation of strength in sacrifice, of patience in service, of love in atonement,—a spiritual elevator and translator from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of light. This Way bridges the chasm between man and God by incarnation and atonement. God throws His one fair Tree across the stream in order that we may come over.

All other religions are religions of human searchings for God. "Christianity is the religion of the divine search for man." Man seeks to put up a stairway to God; God lets a living stairway down from heaven. In the incarnation and cross of His Only Begotten Son, He blasts away the obstructions of iniquity and builds a way, in terms of man's own nature, with living cables of divine strength, which is anchored to Himself in heaven. God be praised for this Way, so like an escalator, on which we need simply stand, holding by the hand of faith, and be lifted up to everlasting life and happiness. God be praised for the Way! For the wonder of it, the simplicity of it, the suitableness of it, and for its perfect safety!

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II. *Notice now Christ's second word. "I am the Truth."*

A way rests upon something. A way strong enough to carry humanity to God can rest upon nothing but the bedrock of Truth. Now what is Truth? Truth is spiritual reality. Truth is the nature of the Father shining in and through all His works; but revealed in Christ the Son.

No man hath seen God. The only-begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him. Christ's Truth was not a thing He had learned or an insight He had gained; but was that in which His mind consisted. Jesus is the Truth alive. He has in Himself the inward witness of the triumphant identity of His thought with reality, and that it is the cause of reality. The world is His idea translating itself into fact. Jesus does not bring a message from God; He is the Message. In Him is the original ideal, in shining exemplification.

The mistake of science is not to realize that Truth by itself is a fragment. Truth is complete only in God's personality. God is a Spirit, and they that would worship Him in Truth must worship Him in Spirit. Intellectual Truth, and the laws of nature, are not an ultimate background. Truth goes back to the will of God.

The absolute correspondence of life with principle, and the adequate recognition of all that is, are found only in Jesus. Hence, He is the Truth. The world lost truth the moment it opened itself to evil and ceased to correspond with the ideal, which is the Thought and Will of God. Only in Christ can it regain its lost possession.

Christ is the Truth, not only because He proclaims redemption, but because He represents it in His Person. He who embraces Christ therefore has thereby appropriated to himself the truth in its whole potentiality and is on the

pathway of realizing in himself, the Truth which his whole being was created to express.

III. *Now let us consider Christ's concluding and highest work—"I am the Life."* God is more than Truth. God's Person embraces His Truth. Personality is finality. When then Jesus declares Himself as the Life, He has reached the goal for man.

The highest gift of God is Eternal Life, and the highest object of our Lord's coming is that we might have life. What Christ brings to us as being the Way; what Christ opens our eyes to, as being the Truth; that Christ confers on us as being the Life.

Life is not wrought mechanically; but it is a gift communicable in kind. Before Abraham and before all the worlds, is Christ and the original germs of being derive their source from Him. In His Personality, mankind's representative son is knit together in sonship with God. From this personality has gone forth the Word of Life, creative and absorbing. His deeds were in the ministration of life. Having power to lay down His life and take it up again He has in His death crushed the enemy of Life. His resurrection as the first-fruits, brought life and immortality to light. In laying down that wonderful Life of His, as a seed is laid into the earth, He rescues our spirits and bodies from the destruction to which they are tending, implants within them the Spirit which alone can guide them to complete unfolding, and assigns to them a place in the eternal world of life, which will finally crystallize and group itself around Him as the Beginning and the Ending of all life. He is indeed the Life, and the kingdom in which He works and reigns is the kingdom of life. He is the Life, and the Spirit which He has sent and is constantly sending into the hearts of men is the Lord and Giver of Life.

That Christ is the Life of the world becomes still more evident when we ask somewhat analytically "What is life?" Life is the ability to unfold and act from within. Human life is the ability, self-conscious in unfolding, that is able to direct action from within and to judge the same; and that, made in the image of God, has God as the goal of its unfolding. Divine Life is the ability, eternally unfolded, to exist, act and judge without dependence on either origin or environment, in the perfect forms of power, truth, righteousness and love. Divine Life is original. Human life is conditioned on environment, out of which it arises. Human life must be nourished from without. Man draws from the world below and around him and from the Spirit of God above him. It is our faith and our glory that man's primal and corrupted life has been renewed, rebaptized and regrafted into the life of God through the incarnation, sacrifice, and the spiritual outpouring consequent thereon, of God's only begotten Son. He is therefore literally the Life of men. He is the living seed of life which falling into the ground at His death, and coming forth in great multiplication in His resurrection, as distributed and reimplanted by the Holy Spirit, has regifted and sustains us in eternal life. Jesus the Bread from heaven has become for us the Resurrection and the Life.

What a wonderful Gift! Far greater than earth's teeming harvests for the sustenance of the lower life is this inner life which Christ gives to the hidden man of the heart, which is rooted and built up in Himself, and which will finally blossom and bloom and burst forth into transcendent glory when He shall appear in majesty and power.

In the Life of Christ we are one. As the human body is one with many members, so also is Christ and we His disciples. Through Him, we all have access by the Spirit unto the Father. Therefore we are no more strangers and

foreigners, but of the household of God, builded together for an habitation of God. That this living and holy temple in the Lord might be truly one, was one of the last prayers of the dying Saviour. In contrast to this unity of the human race in the life of its Lord, stands the scattering and confusion, the disintegration and disunion which was visited upon the ancient world as a punishment for its wickedness. Instead of abiding at one in unity with the Lord, man attempted to unite in rebellion against God. He set up a Babel society to build a city and a tower whose top would reach unto heaven. In attempting to free himself from the unity in the Lord he sought to establish a godless liberty and unity in which he might himself rule. But the Lord held him in derision. He broke him with a rod of iron. He dashed him to pieces as a potter's vessel. And so He has ever done to those who have attempted to centralize spiritual power and effect universal empire under the control of a single ambitious individual or a selfish autocratic group. And so will He continue to do until the end of time.

It is in Christ and in His life alone that we are one. It is God's blessed Son alone, who has reared up a tower whose top reaches to heaven, and whose base is accessible to the heirs of sinful flesh and blood. Those around this base are united by strong and effective bonds. They have one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, Who is above all and through all and in them all. Daily they approach a common mercy seat. Daily God communes with them out of His living oracles. Continually is their failing strength renewed by the bread which cometh down from heaven. The same hope animates, the same word guides, the same bread feeds, the same Providence directs, the same blood cleanses, the same grace quickens and consoles them. The Gospel of Christ appeared to teach

men that they were all of one blood and all had one God as their Father. Divided at Babel, they were united by love and humility at Zion.

My dear Friends, we are not here in this city, named after the ancient and brilliant capital of Spain, in the province of Castile, on the banks of the Tagus, with its sculptured and illuminated Cathedral, built in the historic year 1492, to engage in the manufacture of those marvelously tempered Toledan swords, which are attuned to take life from man with the swiftness of a flash. Nor have we come, as did the founders of this American Toledo to defend the gateways of a great domain from the incursions of the Indians and the French. Nor are we gathered in this most favored and fruitful spot on Ohio soil to select a favored and exalted son for the leadership of the nation. We are come, in the name of a still Greater, God's Only Begotten Son, to proclaim and apply to that part of the world of mankind for which we are responsible, the Way, the Truth, and the Life which our Lord has offered unto men.

We are under the flag of the Cross, to exalt, to further, and to execute the will of the Bringer of Truth and Life into the world. We are His people. His cause is our hope. His love is our inspiration. His will is our law. His word is our power. His work is our intense desire. His triumph is our joy. His Spirit is our peace. His Body and Blood are the pledge and gift of our imperishable life. I ask you therefore to consider, to unfold, to be loyal to, and to be ready to make sacrifice even unto death, for that great revelation which our God hath made of Himself when He says in the words of our text, I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no one cometh to the Father but by Me.

II

THE LIVING BODY

"Ye are the body of Christ." I Corinthians 12:27.

There is a glittering mountain-top rising from the truth in these words. Its peak of Transfiguration is not the human race, nor the Christian Church, but the Lord of Glory, Who is the center of both. His body is spoken of.

His body is the organized bearer and distributor of His life and merits. His body is the organ of His will, and the reflector of His love. His body is the ambassador of His Word, and the executor of His work.

A body is not a soul, but it is the bearer and representative of the soul. It is the personal channel of the soul's activities. It is the gladsome servant of the soul. To all intents and purposes in our earthly relations the soul touches all things outside of itself through the body. The unity of Christ and His body is so complete, and the soul shines forth and acts so fully in the body, that the two are seen as one; and we can not very well be permanently associated with the soul or act with the soul, or show honor to the soul, without approaching it through the body.

The Church as the body of Christ is a no more strange or fanciful thing than are any of the innumerable physical bodies which God has fashioned for the sustentation, the comfort, the protection, and the propagation of the humblest of His creatures.

It may be asserted broadly that no life is possible on earth without a body, that all life tends to reveal and show itself forth in bodily form, and that the most intricate, con-

cealed and difficult relationships lie hidden in the laws that tend to the formation and upholding of a body. The most complicated thing in God's world is the body of an animal or a flower. Sufficiently difficult it certainly is, to ferret out the laws polarization and crystallization, of the fixture and motion of molecules, of vibration as in optics and electrical energy, of gravitation and mechanics, of elemental action and reaction and combination, in control of all inorganic structure, in hill, and air, and star; but the laws that are embedded in vitality, and that organic cell-structure into the bodies of men and animals for continuous service under a higher purpose, are still more complicated.

The world of research is now coming to recognize that bodily structures serve an end outside of themselves, and follow a law above themselves. Science seems now willing to say that there is something above gross matter and not of it, which both forms and directs it toward a purpose beyond itself. And here in the pulpit of the greatest American botanist of the eighteenth century; and at the teaching desk of the most learned entomologist of the same date, it may not be improper to refer to the latest word of this century's biological science, and to the supreme law of all vital organisms, viz., that structure is not responsible for function; but that function designs structure. The body of an acorn, a shell-fish, a bee or a butterfly, is what it is because of the function it is to serve, because of the service it is intended to perform. This earth is the sepulchre of billions of bodies of all forms of past life, and it is the habitat of bodies of all forms of present life. There is the body of the worm and the body of the whale, the body of the deer and the body of the dog, the body of the serpent and the body of the seagull, the body of the beast and that of the barnyard fowl, the body of the laborer and that of the indoor philosopher, the body of a manufacturing plant,

and that of a municipal community, the body of a nation, and the body of Christ, each and all organized around the center of its vitality for the purpose of properly executing the function it is intended to perform.

This is but saying that organic life lives solely, unless it become parasitic,—in virtue of service. The supreme law of vitality, of growth, of beauty, is this, that in serving we live. In relinquishing a narrow and temporary station of activity, with its comfort, for a larger and more advanced station, we grow. When we cease to give service, we cease to grow, and when we cease to grow, we begin to die. By losing the life of today, and sacrificing the strength of today for the service of today we find the life of tomorrow. We gain the structure for the function of tomorrow. By losing our life, for the name of Jesus we find it. By giving our strength, we create the possibility of receiving higher strength, and of stepping into a new and freer domain beyond the confines of self. And the highest privilege of a bodily organism is to sustain the soul in labor and sacrifice, and then hand itself down, fully centered in the spark of life, and fully organized around it, to unborn generations of the future, undiminished in the brilliance of its powers and undeviating in the strength of its functional purpose.

This is God's reason for giving us His divine Son incarnate in a human frame, which might dwell among us, to unfold the Will and Purpose of the Father in the Person of the Son; to first veil the divine glory in the service of labor and sacrifice, till the work of the Son be done; and then to reveal it in an exaltation everlasting. And this is the reason why those who, from generation to generation, are re-created for the new life in Christ, by the Word of the Spirit, are gathered and organized about Christ, their central spark of vitality, into a spiritual body, of which He is the head and director; and they as members in Him, in

this wonderful spiritual body, do execute the service of His will, and grow by serving, through that grace bestowed by Christ, into larger life, till they all come in the unity of the faith, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

Some interpreters regard our text as a figure of speech, blossoming forth from St. Paul's intellect as a conception of brilliant but passing comparison. I believe however that the phrase is not a brilliant thought arising like a blossom of genius from the fertile imagination of St. Paul, but that it is a divine and actual adumbration, faint indeed and inadequate as to an outer image, of a far stronger and underlying reality. Let us try to examine this reality. Its first quality is this:

1. THAT THE BODY OF CHRIST IS ORGANIZED ON A LOFTIER AND A MORE POTENT PRINCIPLE THAN ANY OTHER VITAL ORGANISM TO BE FOUND IN GOD'S WORLD.

All other organisms are brought together under the centralizing dominion of God's great law; but here is a body which is organized and brought together under the drawing and centralizing power of God's great love. All other bodily organisms are brought together under the attracting strength of some impersonal principle; but here is a body that is organized into vital unity, by the Spirit, under the centralizing and assimilating energy of a Person, a divine Person, the Person of the only begotten Son. This is the marvelous fact, in the truth that we are the body of Christ, viz., that Christ, in the full vitality of His Person, is the center of His Church. Not an idea, or an element of nationality or government; not an economical function in the realm of metallurgy or the sphere of locomotion is it that has crystallized us into one form and fiber; but it is

Christ, the human indeed, but beyond this, the divine; the incarnate fountain of spiritual energy and bloom, who in and by His service in Death, and in Life, has drawn and vitalized us as the outer structure and instrumentality of a further service, in the execution of His purpose toward the ever oncoming generations of men. No man, no patriot, no principle, but CHRIST, is our organizer, our fountain of life, our revealer and director of purpose, and our builder of functional structure for service.

And who is this Christ, of whom we form the body? There He stands, the wonderful Man, the Mystery manifesting a Life Eternal in a Form Temporal, but then raised to the Right Hand of the Father, in a Form Immortal. There He stands and speaks the Mind Eternal as One who testifies of that which is His very Own, as a Child of its Father: "No one knows the Father but the Son." There He stands and declares Himself as clothed with the Power Eternal, in the possession of which He works the initial works of Grace and final work of Judgment for all the world. There He stands as the Sacrifice of heaven provided once for all for the sin of earth, as the one Lamb offered by God for the guilt of a race. There He stands the incarnate conscience of humanity, and this old race today yet experiences that by turning back to Jesus, its conscience is awakened and stirred, and its better nature is revived. There He stands over against all the misery, the despair and wretchedness of this world, even up to the point of His own death, as One who is not unnerved by this misery, but conquers it by the power and the sacrifice of a ceaseless love. There He stands not merely as a single blazing point on the dark canvas of humanity—but as the One Who Lights Up The Human Race—for He does not keep His divine life of holiness and love for Himself, but carries these powers to divert them as a stream, into the commun-

ion of saints. There He stands, freed from limitations of time, and locality, and history, after His body needs no longer to bend beneath the world-cross, and His foot needs no longer to touch the dust of Capernaum and Bethsaida, transfigured in the glory of His own Resurrection, elevated to the right hand of the Father, the World's Complete Redeemer, offering to the nations and the ages the fruits of His personal victory, and drawing men of yesterday, today and tomorrow to Himself; transforming them by the Spirit in His Word and the blood in His Sacrament from defiled creatures of the dust to children of the living God, kings and princes in the realms of everlasting day. There He stands binding, and knitting and weaving and interfusing His flock by the loosening and the quickening strength of His Own precious blood into the great and real mystical body which is to be His bride, and which He will sanctify and cleanse with the washing of water by the Word, that He may present it to Himself a glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle, or any blemish whatsoever.

What an organizing principle hath the Church—the Person of Christ! What a vital relationship the Spirit of God in the Word and Blood of Christ! What a unity, what a correlation between Head and members, and members and members! One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism! What a perfection—without spot or wrinkle! What a service,—and what a growth, which increaseth with the increase of God!

We have seen that our text implies that the Body of Christ is organized on a loftier and a more potent principle than any other vital complex to be found in God's world.

II. In the second place it is implied THAT CHRIST OPERATES, IN HIS WORK ON THE WORLD, IN AND THROUGH THIS ORGANISM.

While the truth of God's Word has its effect, or rather an effect, wherever it may be heard, and is a seed that goes floating to wide distances on the wings of the atmosphere, and far away from the original stalk and plant that gave it birth, and while it thus sporadically effects results apart from the main and more concrete organic trunk, known as His Church, yet the substantial, the continuous, the regular, the dependable work of the Lord Jesus Christ is carried on not by far-away touches of His truth that enter as a thought into the minds of distant thinkers, but by means of that particular organism which St. Paul terms the body of Christ.

The Kingdom of God upon earth, in its larger sense, as used on the Gospel, is a far wider reality than the Church of Christ; but it is also a far less intensive, less human, less concrete, and less serviceable element as a sphere or instrument for the work of the grace of God upon the hearts of men, than is the Church of God.

The Kingdom of God is rather a result brought about in the hearts of men, by the operation of the Work of God; a result which is the necessary unfolding and triumph of its own inner nature; than a self-conscious communion of souls connected up in the bonds of a central redeeming and life-sharing Personality, and composed of a series of definite and divine agencies at work under the direction and for the use of a personal Head.

The Church distinguishes itself from the kingdom by the fact that in Its Head, in Its material, in Its object and in Its agencies It is personal. The will of God is the center of the kingdom of God. The person of Christ, Christ in His personality, is the center of the Church of God.

III. In the third place it is implied in our text that THE ORGANISM EXISTS FOR THE SAKE OF THE

ONE WHO ANIMATES IT, AND NOT FOR ITS OWN SAKE.

The Church is not an end in itself. It will never shine righteously, and in the right relation, as Its own Sun. If It seek Its own perpetuation, Its own establishment, Its own glorification, It is perverting Its purpose. Its only justification for existence is as an organ of Christ. From Christ It derives human plane. This great fact in the Christian Church differentiates It from all other forms of conjoint or corporate activity, and is a corrective of every desire for a grand religious establishment of earthly and visible permanence which shall minister chiefly to the exaltation and the fame of man.

Let us not yield to the illusion that the body of Christ is of the earth and earthly. There are celestial bodies, and there are terrestrial bodies; but the glory of the celestial is one and the glory of the terrestrial is another. For God gives to every seed its own kind of body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. The first man had a body of flesh and blood, which cannot inherit the kingdom of God. The second man is the Lord from heaven, Whose natural Body was made spiritual, and Who in His spiritual body has become the personal soul of a wider body embracing redeemed humanity, which is the spiritual sphere, organ and complex of His own activity. For as is the Lord from heaven, so also is the heavenly organism that correlates and binds them that are heavenly.

IV. The fourth point to be emphasized as involved in this insight of St. Paul is THE INTIMATE RELATION BETWEEN THE CHURCH AND ITS HEAD.

The true Church will respond almost miraculously to the will, the work, the feelings, the faith, the hope, the joy, the sorrows, the signs and the purposes of the Master. It

will not serve the world, nor love another than the One Who loved and gave Himself for it. It will labor in the consciousness of a supreme strength, which cannot be wounded by neglect, nor thwarted by imposing barriers of time and space.

A body that does not respond to its Lord is a blanched and shadowy organ, a sky robbed of its blue, a sunbeam stripped of its gold, a leaf divested of its verdure, a cheek turned from its crimson bloom to the ashen hue of stony death. The Church will stand for Her Lord. She would rather have Her members dashed with the blood of sacrifice, than sprinkled with the dust of meanness; She would prefer the garments of praise, inwoven in exulting white and purple, to the cloak of indifference worn down to a world-wise gray and brown; She would rather crown Her Lord in the affirmation of Her whole heart with shining gold, than criticise the probabilities of His birth, His resurrection and His intercession at the right hand in glory everlasting.

V. The fifth important inference in the text is that of THE COMPLETE SUBJECTION OF THE CHURCH TO THE PLAN AND POSITION OF THE HEAD.

Here is the true Lutheran predestination, in Christ, as over against the modern Church which makes man the chief center of all things, and the fatalistic Church which makes the law of God oppressively dominant and reduces man to an infinitesimal.

In the grace of Christ the Head, man finds his full place in his membership in the Church, and is lifted to the loftiest estate; but independently of the grace of Christ, there is no foothold which we can find either in nature or in revelation that affords any slight assurance of real escape from the universal and impersonal dominance of an eternal law.

Time fails to further tell of this wonderful body of Christ; of the sacred simplicity of its birth; or of the mystery of its growth. It grows vitally, not mechanically. It grows from within outward, and not by process of external annexation. All the material offered to it from without will only clog its system, unless this be assimilated and converted into its own structure, and thus become an organized channel of the will and vitality of its Lord. Time fails to tell of its expansion from a mustard seed to the mightiest of the trees under heaven, in whose branches the nations find safety and shelter. Time fails to tell of the joy of the Body's obedience, of the calls on Her strength, of the sacrifice She brings of Her earthly resources that She may enlarge Her higher powers; of the dependence Her Master has placed upon Her, and the duty that lies before Her; of Her life in service, Her worship in praise and Her reward in purity and power. Time fails to tell, how, superior to the sun-lit wing of the eagle in the Alps, to the leaping foot of the leopard in the desert, to the skilful hand of the man in the city, to the glowing pearl and the emerald and the chrysophrase in the walls of the New Jerusalem, She shall become resplendent, as the Body of Life, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb; and coördinated to full communion in His holy Person, shall be presented as the resultant of His world-long work of grace before the glory of the Father.

Appreciative of the suffering, the service and the supremacy of the Church, as among all bodily organizations on earth, and recognizing dimly the grandeur of Her outline, and the grace and truth, in the Holy Spirit given to whom we who are gathered here do represent; let us continue grounded and settled, unmoved from the hope of the Gospel, rejoicing to suffer what is laid on us in Christ, for His Body's sake, which is the Church, whereof

we are made servants, to fulfill the Word of God, even the mystery of the world which hath been hid from ages, but now is made manifest to His saints; which is Christ in us, the hope of glory, whom we proclaim to every man that we may present him perfect in Christ Jesus. Amen.

III

WHO IS THIS?

"Renew a right spirit within me." Psalm 51:10.

"Who is this?" . . . . That is the question heard on every side as Jesus with an ever-growing number of attendants rides through the streets of Jerusalem. "Who is this?" . . . . This the The Man Who makes people forget themselves, Who stirs them to climb trees and to run through the streets as little children, Who fills them with rapture and smites the strings of their hearts till they ring with joy, Who impels them to sing "Hosanna, Hosanna, to the Son of David, Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." This is The Man Who creates people over again, Who takes away their tired look, Who dips them into the Fountain of Youth, and brings them up radiant and aglow with roseate hues of an expectant future. This is The Man Who finds us in a dark corner, weeping; and touches us with His sweet sayings of hope till He lights up our very tears with crimson and gold,—the gold of joy and the crimson of love. This is The Man Who plucks us out of the somber background of the storm, out of the darkness of the tempest, out of the lightning-flashes of guilt; and hides us in peace beneath the shadow of His wing. The gloom of the mind is no more; the lightning dies into faintness; the thunder rolls more softly in the distance; the sun comes out sweetly in a purified air, gilds with splendor the very shadows that hover over us, and makes our spirit fresh and fragrant with newness of life, so that the trees sparkle with the departing drops and the silence becomes vocal

with heart-notes of praise and the wrath of the storm-cloud's condemnation is replaced by the jewelled bow of promise above our heads. This is The Man Who changes life for us and gives it a new meaning. This is The Man Who is neither the maker nor the mender of our fortunes, but the source, the giver, the renewer of a right spirit within us.

Renewal is making over again. It is restoration to original perfection. I prize the man who can restore my eyesight or rebuild my heart like the eagle's, but I cling most to the person who can make me over in my innermost will and feelings, who can renew a right spirit within me. And this is the Man who can do these things. He can and does restore sight to my soul and strength to my will so that I can see and do those things which make for my highest welfare and happiness. He instills right ideals, right aspirations and right desires in my heart. He gives me the longings, the purposes and the outlook of one made in the image of God. In a word He effects the birth and development of a right spirit within me.

We have many skilled repairers in the world. To them we take our watches, our furniture, and our electric wires. But to repair is not to renew. Repair is patching up the old, mending the torn, alleviating the rheumatic; renewal is making that which is worn and unsightly new again. Again, to renew is not to renovate. To renovate is to give the appearance of the new; to press back that which bulges, into original shape and form. To renovators we take our furs and wardrobes. To renew is to bring back something to its original state, to restore its primitive perfection. It is an internal process. It is to fill with perfect vitality. To renew the spirit of a man is to make him over again—to cause him to be born again, with all the potencies and perfection of re-creation. And that is what Jesus can

do. He can regenerate us and impart to us that vigor, that freshness, and that power which are the possessions of the sons and daughters of God. "Who is this?" . . . . This is The Man Who can make us new again,—our inclinations, our dispositions, our relationships, our activities, our interests, in short—our spirit. What does This Man give us? He gives us new life.

But he also gives us new hope. A man who has lost his hopes is a rag; a flapping, flimsy rag. He is without cheer, without comfort, without impulse, without ambition. Hope deferred maketh the heart sick; and hope destroyed causeth the soul to wilt. He who is without hope is to be pitied,—he sees no sun behind the clouds, he looks forward to no dawn of better things. But this Man is the God of Hope. He creates hope. He makes hope possible. He turns hope into reality. In Him we find satisfactory explanation of the present; to Him we look for better things for the future; through Him we wait expectantly for that blessed estate where there shall be no pain or distress, no sighing or weeping, no sickness or death, no sorrow or sadness. Because we know Him and what He has done for us we long anxiously for His reappearing, for the consummation of that redemption which He has wrought for us and for entrance into that glorious companionship which is life eternal. He gives us hope and He is hope.

This Man renews our love. A heart without love is cold, dispassionate, sad, and lonely. There is nothing there to give it warmth and cheer, nothing to respond to its needs and longings for affection and communion, nothing to stir it up into consecrated action. But Jesus fills this vacancy. He arouses interest in Himself. He awakens regard for Himself. He makes Himself a place in our lives. He affords us His counsel, His comfort, His encouragement. He gives the heart something to think about and the hand

something to do. And so, life assumes for us new color and new meaning. In the words of the poet,

"The world which seems to lie about us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor life, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain,
But when His loved hand is laid in ours,
When jaded with the rush and glare,
Of the interminable world,
Our eyes can in our Saviour's eyes read clear,
And we are by the tones of His loved voice aroused,
Our lost pulse of feeling stirs again,
And we become aware of our life's flow;
And again are sure that we know,
The hills from whence our life arose,
The sea where it goes.
His love brings good to life,
His love gilds it, and gives it worth."

"Who is this?" . . . . This is The Man Who gives us new faith. The haughty spirit of a Haman strikes us down. The lying spirit of a Gehazi fills us with skepticism. The jealous spirit of a Cain or a Saul overwhelms us with sorrow and distress. The cutting spirit of them that call down fire from heaven wounds us unto despair or fills us with resentment. The ungrateful spirit of the nine lepers takes all the joy out of our living. But the spirit of this Man Who has come to save us and Who lifts us up in His arms and blesses us; Who says, "Take eat this is My body broken for you,"—gives us faith. It imparts confidence in Him as our only Lord and Saviour. It makes us feel that because of Him divine justice so far as we are concerned has been eternally satisfied. It enables us to rest serenely and imperturbably upon the grace and mercy of God. It illuminates our future with rays of heavenly glory. The life I now live, I live by faith in the Son of God, Who loved me and gave Himself for me. He dwells in my heart by faith; He justifies me by faith; He is the Author and Finisher of my faith.

"Who is this?" . . . . This is the Man Who gives us new loyalty and new service. He says, "Continue ye in my love that My joy may remain in you and that your joy may be full." "Ye are My friends if ye do whatsoever I command you." "I have chosen you and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit and that your fruit should remain." You have found response in Him, now He looks for response in you. The life of His kingdom beats in your pulse and in that strength you go forth into labor and effort, feeling that the hopes and sorrows, the defeats and victories of the things which He stands for, are your own. By Him you participate in the life and love of God and by their indwelling you conquer your worst enemies, the enemies of the soul. In Him you gain the peace that passeth all understanding. You are high above business that degenerates into a mad rush for riches. You are above politics that sinks into a senseless scramble for privilege and place. You are exalted beyond education that deteriorates into a feverish cramming of specialized information. You find no joy in the charities that are converted into a parade ground for bustling busybodies, nor in a religion that is corrupted into a thirst for thrilling sensations or loaded with foolish ostentations. You see life clear and you see it whole; you incarnate the wisdom of the ages in the service of the hour. Your sorrows and your joys, your repose and your future are safe in the heart and hands of Jesus. Your soul is satisfied. Your life is as large as the world, as deep as the sea, as high as the blue arches of heaven.

"Who is this?" . . . . You know;—for He is yours. This is your Lord, your God, your Saviour and your King. You love Him with a burning heart and He blesses you with the fullness of His enduring benediction. O ye that need a new spirit, come to Him and He will give you new life,

new hope, new love, and new devotion. Remember by Him were all things created and in Him do all things consist. And He is the Head of the Church that in all things He might have the preëminence. In Him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. In Him lies peace through the blood of the Cross. In Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. In Him and Him alone do you become complete. Come to Him, dear friend, and when the world comes to its climax, and the nations are inquiring "Who is this?" you will know. You will be bound to Him with the cords of an everlasting love, and your heart will sing in greeting, "Hosanna, Hosanna, Hosanna to the Son of David. Blessed is He that cometh in the name of the Lord." Amen.

IV

OUR KING

"Behold your King." John 19:14.

We Americans have no king. We are a free people. What a number of nations have done in recent years in getting rid of their kings and emperors, we Americans did in 1776 when we declared we would no longer be bound by the inconsiderate rule of George III of Great Britain.

But there is one King Whom we do acknowledge. There is One Lord Who we know is over us and before Whom we bow in gladness. There is One above us to Whom we owe our life, our liberty and our happiness; One Who has bought and saved us with His own precious blood; One Who has ever blessed us by His kingship and to Whom on this Palm Sunday as we hear again the story of His entry into Jerusalem we pledge our allegiance.

Our King is the King Eternal, Immortal, Invisible,—the Only Wise God, to Whom are honor and glory forever. Our flag is not the fading palm of Jerusalem, nor the green shamrock of St. Patrick, nor the Scotch thistle of O'Dougle, nor the pale crescent of Bagdad, but the blood-stained Cross of Golgotha. "God forbid that I should glory, save in the Cross of Jesus Christ my Lord, who loved me and who gave Himself for me."

"Onward Christian Soldiers
Marching as to war
With the Cross of Jesus
Going on before."

It is this King, the King of Heaven, under Whom and

under Whose flag these catechumens are enlisting for life, to Whom I would direct your attention this morning.

1. He is a King with a throne. "Heaven is My throne, and earth is My footstool," says He. A throne is the seat of authority. It is higher than the bench of the Supreme Court. It is higher than the International Tribunal at the Hague. It is the highest authority of which we can conceive. All rights come from the throne of God. All justice is established there. All freedom flows from that throne like a crystal stream. All law and all the courses of life center there.

Our King sits on that throne and that throne is the seat of final authority. Says the Evangelist in his great book of Revelation, "I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from Whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the Book of Life, and the sea gave up the dead which were in it and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them and they were judged every man according to their works. And I saw the King coming with clouds in the glory of heaven, and His eyes were as a flame of fire, and His voice as the sound of many waters. When he shall come in His glory and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, and He shall say unto them on His right hand, 'Come ye blessed of My Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.'" This is our King on the throne, even Jesus Christ, Who ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from whence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead, whose Kingdom shall have no end. My King,

the King under Whom I am enlisted has a throne. He is exalted and possesses authority; and that authority is final.

2. In the second place, my King is a King with a sceptre. If a throne is the symbol of authority, a sceptre is a symbol of power. The Roman soldiers proffered my King a broken reed for a sceptre, in order that they might mock Him in His lack of power. Little did they dream that He had laid His real sceptre down for a few years to come to earth and suffer and make possible their salvation. Little did they dream that His real sceptre was one before which they themselves would bow. But Pilate and Herod know today who holds the sceptre that keeps the stars in their courses and curbs the whirlwind and the earthquake. They know now that the Psalmist spoke the truth when he cried, "The kings of the earth set themselves together against the Lord's Anointed, saying, 'Let us break His bands asunder, and cast away His cords and cables from us.' He that sitteth in the heavens shall have them in derision. He shall break them with a sceptre of iron; He shall dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Unto His Son the Father said, 'Thy throne O God is forever and ever; and the sceptre of Thy Kingdom is a righteous sceptre.' The pride of Assyria shall be brought down and the sceptre of Egypt shall depart away. The strong staff, and the beautiful rod shall be broken, but a Star shall come out of Jacob and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel, that shall unite the corners of the nations, and that shall sway an everlasting dominion." Our King is a King of power. The sun and the moon and all peoples, steam and electricity, dynamite and all explosives, governments, institutions and all inventions, armies and all cabinets do bow before Him. He has power. He spake and the worlds were formed. He speaks again and the worlds will be destroyed. He needs to speak the word only, and I and mine shall be saved. He

is the King puissant and invincible. His sceptre shall never be wrenched from His hand. I am enlisted under a strong King.

3. He is further a King with a hand.—a helping hand. How often He put forth His hand and healed the suffering of those about Him! His hand touched the mother's hand, and the fever left her. He took the dead maiden by the hand and she sat up. He took the blind man by the hand and healed him. He lifted up His hands and blessed them. His hand was the hand of benediction. My King has a helping hand and He uses it to guide and bless and lift and strengthen. It never struck another's cheek. It never flashed a haughty jewel. It never bathed itself in flowery scents. It never was folded in idleness, but frequently in prayer. Yea, and if you look at it today you will find in it the mark of wounds.

"My Saviour's hands, wherein I see
Only two scars, show more to me
Than if a kingdom's gold I found
In place of each forgotten wound."

I love my King because He was wounded for me. He is the King with the wounded hands.

4. He is also the King with a heart. Some kings are haughty and some are stern. They strike blows with a mailed fist; or they live in palaces eating delicate viands and wearing soft garments, unconcerned about their needy subjects outside. But not so my King. He is the King with a heart.

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Come unto Me and rest
Lay down thou weary one, lay down,
Thy head upon My breast.'

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'Behold I freely give
The living water, thirsty one,
Stoop down and drink and live.'

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
'I am this dark world's Light,
Look unto Me, thy morn shall rise
And all thy day be bright.'"

This is the Son of God who loved me and gave Himself for me. This is the King with a heart and that heart was pierced by a spear for me. This is the King whose heart is grieved when I do not heed His voice and partake of His salvation. Dear Friend, do you love your King as He loves you? Is your heart as devoted to Him as His to you? He might have been haughty, proud, exacting. He had every reason to be,—because of His exalted position and high purpose. But thank God He is not. He comes with a heart pierced for your sin and He asks, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me?"

5. As we look at our King again, we note that He is a King with a Cross. Having made peace by the blood of the Cross, He reconciled us unto God. He blotted out the handwriting that was against us by covering it with His blood. "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness even so was the Son of Man lifted up on the Cross, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Do you not see your King with the Cross on His shoulder, carrying with that heavy burden the burden of your sin? And will you not take your cross also for His sake? Will you not bear it after Him? Will you not sing with Isaac Watts

"When I survey the wondrous Cross
On which the Prince of glory died
My richest gain I count but loss
And pour contempt on all my pride?"

6. Our King is further a King with a sword. Christ is fighting the greatest of all wars—the battle for the true, the good, the kind and the righteous; the battle for salvation; the battle for the downfall of the powers of sin and

darkness, and all those evils that take men into captivity. He is fighting intrepidly, unceasingly, invincibly. But am I in His Army? Am I fighting these things? Am I doing what he expects of me? And you who enlisted many years ago, have you grown weary of the battle or are you "carrying on?"

"Am I a soldier of the Cross,
A follower of the Lamb,
And shall I fear to own His cause,
Or blush to speak His Name?

"Are there no foes for me to face?
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vain world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?

"Thy saints, in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer, though they die;
They see the triumph from afar,
By faith they bring it nigh."

7. And thus we see in the last place, that our King is a King with a crown. "And I saw heaven opened and behold a white horse, and He that sat upon him was called 'Faithful and True,' and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. And on His head were many crowns. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him. And I looked, and behold a white cloud and upon the cloud One sat like unto the Son of Man, having on His head a golden crown."

How different from the day when Jesus stood before Pilate and came forth wearing the crown of thorns and the purple robe! How different from that day when soldiers mocking Him bowed the knee before Him and cried "Hail, King of the Jews!" And so it shall be with you,—poor, faithful, suffering, soldier of the Cross. When the Chief Shepherd shall appear wearing His many jeweled crown you also shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Do not forget the great Apostle who said, "I have fought

a good fight," also said, "There is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing."

Our King is the King not only of authority and of power, of the ready hand and the pierced heart, of the sin-burdened Cross and of mighty warfare, but also the King of the incorruptible crown.

"Praise, young folks, the King of heaven
To His feet your tribute bring
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who like you His praise can sing?
Praise Him, Praise Him,
Praise the everlasting King."

You are enlisting under His flag. You are pledging your fealty to Him this morning. You are going to endure discipline, hardship and not grow weary. You are going to fight sin with the sword of the Spirit. You are going to make sacrifices to be true to Him who is true to you. But your labors and your denials will not be without their reward. They will not pass unnoticed. Your King, Who knows all things and can do all things will place on your brow a crown, that is incorruptible. And now, as you come forward to be confirmed, look unto Jesus, and behold your King! Amen.

V

THE SEALED OF GOD

"Him hath God the Father sealed." John 6:27.

Did any of you ever hold a thousand-dollar note in your hand? . . . . What was it? . . . . Only a piece of paper. . . . . What then gave it its value? Was it not the seal imprinted on it,—the authorization, authentification, and testimonial that the Treasury of the United States was standing back of it, and would redeem the promise stamped on its face?

Seals, as the attests of value are the oldest of human instruments. They antedate the art of writing. They condense value into graphic perpetuity. In the book of Genesis we read that Judah who drew Joseph out of the pit, had a seal hung round his neck. In the Alnwick museum there is the signet device of a king who lived 5,000 years ago. It is believed that the clay seal of Sennacherib who lived 800 B. C. has been found at Nineveh. The ancient Babylonians, Egyptians, and the Semitic races all used seals. Old Testament documents were always sealed before they were given into the hands of others, and these seals had to be broken before the facts of the roll could be read and revealed. For this reason we read of the opening of the seals in the book of Revelation. The early Christian emperors always made use of seals. The Popes also since their assumption of the highest ecclesiastical authority have had their general and privy seals. History speaks further of the seals of queens and princes, towns and cities, guilds and corporate bodies,

universities and schools, of personal seals with effigies and of merchant's marks.

The universal use of the seal seems to have been to ratify and authenticate documents, to safeguard deposits, to testify to ownership, security, authority, and distinction. St. Paul tells the Corinthians that they are the seal of his apostleship, that is, they are the living authentication of his mission as a true apostle. He tells us that the Christian believer is sealed by the Holy Ghost until the day of redemption, that is, he is kept pure, safe, and precious as a document until the hour for opening it arrives. He tells Timothy that the Lord "having this seal knoweth them that are His." And in our text the apostle says of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Him hath God the Father sealed." And the more we know about seals the more we are impressel by the idea he sets before us. This morning therefore I propose to show you how God the Father has sealed His Son by asking you to look at seven uses of the seal as we find them embodied in the customs of human society.

1. The first and oldest use of the seal is to attest genuineness, to give assurance that that which is sealed, is the real thing. You have often seen over the mouths of bottles of proprietary medicines a stamp which says, "None genuine without this seal." So God the Father gives the Lord Jesus Christ a seal, by which He publicly acknowledges Him as genuine. He thus testifies to Jesus as one today would acknowledge his own signature.

Now what was the seal or attest of genuineness that God gave to the Lord Jesus Christ? How did He accredit and ratify our Lord as worthy and competent to discharge His duties? How did He confirm our Lord's teachings and claim? Dear Friends, He sealed Him with the Spirit that rested on Him. He sealed Him with the voice which said from heaven, "This is My beloved Son in Whom I am well

pleased. Hear ye Him.'' He sealed Him by the vision and prophecy that was in Him and by His power to work miracles. This personal ratification was the proper one. No outward material ring or signet would have done. God is a Spirit hence His seal would be spiritual in character. Whomsoever He sealed would have on Him the marks of the divine, He would have power in the Spirit. And these things Jesus had. By them man could see that He was what He claimed to be; by them they could know that He was worthy of their trust and love.

2. The second function of a seal is to attest and express value; to indicate that that which is sealed is not only genuine but rare and costly; yea, not only to declare value but to mark distinction. There are thousands of books printed in Venice, but there is only a small handful whose imprint testifies that they are incunabula. There are hundreds of thousands of Shakspeare's works, but the original folio sealed with the first imprint is almost unknown. The mark, the seal, the name of a great painter confers enormous value to a small piece of otherwise common canvas. This is the point in our text. God has sent many prophets, but only one Saviour. God has had many servants, but only one Son. He whom God has sealed as His Son is lifted up and distinguished from all the rest of the world.

Said Jesus, ''God indeed sealed and attested Moses by his miracles, by the manna with which he fed your fathers in the wilderness and by the water he drew out of the rock. But that manna grew old in a day, and that water endured only for a little time. The true bread that God has given to the world—the real and only bread of life that He gives through Me is the bread which came down from Heaven. I am that bread of life. He that cometh to Me shall never hunger and he that believeth on Me shall never thirst.''

And to indicate this great value in Jesus, God gave to Him a seal; a seal whereby He fed 4,000 from a few loaves, whereby He turned water into wine, whereby He made the lame to walk, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the dead to rise. From the seal of Jesus—His fullness of eternal life—we know His value and the value of His gifts.

3. The object of the seal is thirdly, to preserve intact, to declare that that which is sealed is uncontaminated, untouched, unadulterated, unbroken, has not been tampered with. Hence the caution of the careful manufacturer—"Look for the seal. Our goods are sold in unbroken packages." Purity, perfection, and completeness are vouched for by the presence of the seal. What does the great seal on the valuable envelope handed to you by the Express Company indicate? It indicates that the money in the package has not been tampered with—that the goods have never been touched or adulterated by others, that you receive the pure, whole, complete, genuine article.

So the Father has sealed the Son to indicate just that. He has sealed Him to show that He has the pure, whole, unadulterated, genuine message from Heaven—that His word is the real truth, that it is not a guess, or a theory, or a painful human deduction. His seal declares "Here is One Who brings the truth from Heaven—the Only One Who proclaims it in its purity and completeness, the Only One sealed to attest these things." He alone can say, "I say the truth. I am the Truth. If ye believe Me not, believe Me for My sake',—My work's sake." Dear Friends, you can trust Jesus. You can put confidence in what He says. You can depend on and rely on His words. They have the seals of Heaven on them.

4. The fourth object of a seal, in personal transactions, is to attest the confidential and trustworthy transferral of information and affection. It assures you that a certain

communication, is for you, and indicates the confidence in which that missive is sent. The seal on that letter—you recognize it. It means much to you. It indicates the personal relation of Him Who sends it and His willingness to confide to you all He promises. The Song of Solomon says, "Set me as a seal upon Thine heart, as a seal upon Thy arm. Many waters cannot quench my love neither can the floods drown it." So the Father has sealed Christ to indicate His personal relation to you. His Son is the bearer of His love to you. His Son is the revelation of His heart and will to you. His Son is the means whereby He would save and bless you. You know it because He carries the Father's mark. As you look on Him and observe the marks of the divine about Him you know that the Father has loved you with an everlasting love and that if you come unto Him, He will in no wise cast you off. Those marks are your assurance and your joy.

5. The fifth use of the seal is to confer official authority, and transfer official power. Pharaoh, king of Egypt, when he exalted Joseph and set him over all the land, took his signet or seal ring from his royal hand and put it on Joseph's finger, to testify publicly that he had given all power and authority over to Joseph. When Jezebel, the wife of Ahab, tried to get the vineyard of Naboth for her disappointed husband, the first thing she did was to write letters in Ahab's name and seal them with his seal, thus giving her orders regal authority. Late in the afternoon of July 4, 1776, after the Declaration of Independence had been signed, the Continental Congress "resolved that Dr. Franklin, John Adams, and Mr. Jefferson be a committee to prepare a device for a Seal of the United States of America," so that the official strength of the new nation could be conferred upon its acts, and its official authority be transferred to its elected executives in due and visible

manner. Thus came finally into being the well-known Great Seal of the United States, consisting of an escutcheon in the breast of the American eagle, holding in his right talon an olive branch, in his left a bundle of 13 arrows, in his beak a scroll inscribed with the motto, "E Pluribus Unum."

It is the seal which represents the majesty and authority of the act. Every corporation in this country acts and speaks only by its common seal, for as an invisible body, it cannot manifest its right or its intention by any personal act. Every document transferring ownership, power, or authority, bears on its face the seal of a Notary Public, an officer created by the state for the express purpose of officially recognizing and validating such transfer. Ask a doctor of medicine, or a minister of the gospel by what authority he practices his profession, and he will point to the gilt or red seal on his diploma, by which the institution that has trained and examined him officially recognizes and testifies to his fitness, and clothes him with the authority of his department.

It was thus that God the Father, as our text says, sealed His Son. "Him hath God the Father sealed." At His baptism the voice out of Heaven, saying "This is My beloved Son, hear ye Him;" at His birth, the angel choir; in His life, the working of visible miracles; attested officially to the call, the fitness, the authority, the supreme power, and the message of the Son, Whom He sent. In our lesson for the day, He did it again by means of a miracle. It was the most natural and direct method of procedure. "Thinkest thou not that the Father hath given Me power to forgive,—to heal?" asked Jesus. Then turning to the one in need, He wrought the miracle. This was the visible seal set by the Father in the work of the Son. It indicated that He was fit, that He could be trusted, that He had official sanction, and that what He said and did was valid.

And thus Christ also has left His two seals with His church—the one officially testifying to the entrance of the Holy Spirit into our souls, to enlighten, convert and sanctify them—the Sacrament of Holy Baptism wherewith we are sealed; and the other testifying to the forgiveness of our sins and to our incorporation into the fullness of His divine life in the mystery of His flesh and blood—the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper. By these we are sealed into His death, to be raised again through His resurrection. This is our assurance, our certitude, our official validation, the visible testimony whereby God actually binds Himself and we may be sure through this act that we are saved. Thus Christ was sealed by the Father, and thus we are sealed by Christ, in most solemn, effective and official authorization. Thus we are marked and set apart as saints, who will for Christ's sake receive God's recognition and approbation.

6. The sixth use of the seal is,—to grasp all the elements of greatness in an enterprise and make it concrete, visible, and effective. Thus the great seal of the commonwealth in a single object summarizes the powers, virtues and benevolent intentions of the government and impresses them on the beholder.

The one great enterprise of God is the Kingdom of Heaven, the inauguration and gift of eternal life, the redemption and exaltation of the human race, the founding of a new Heaven and a new earth. Now all this is pictured, promised and executed in the person and work of Jesus Christ. He is Himself the seal of this. In Him is revealed the glorious character of the Kingdom of Heaven. His miracles declare not merely the helplessness and hopelessness of man in the midst of sin and evil but the ability and willingness of God to help him. On Him is laid the sin of the world and by Him are its penalties borne and removed forever. His resurrection is not only a sign of His own

triumph over sin and death but of His ability to give that same life and freedom to us all. His ascension is a splendid augury of the honor and glory that awaits the faithful at His coming. He said, "All power is given unto Me in Heaven and on earth" and because He has the Father's seal upon Him we know He speaks the truth and wait eagerly for His appearing.

7. The seventh and last use of the seal is to give finality, completeness, and conclusion to a great transaction. The seal is the last thing to be attached—then the contract is done.

And for this reason reason also was Christ sealed by the Father. The Divine Stamp was put on Him to indicate that the great work of salvation was about to be consummated. He would reveal the Father's will in its entirety. He would throw the bridge of life across the abyss of death. He would put everlasting peace, prosperity, and happiness within the reach of mankind. When He was finished nothing more would have to be done and nothing more would be done. For this reason Jesus said on the night of His betrayal, "I have finished the work which Thou gavest Me to do." He cried on the Cross, "It is finished." It pleased God by the redemption of the Cross to save the world and to this end He put His seal on Jesus Christ. He has done His part and conquered death that God might be all in all.

Dear Friends, God sent His Son and

1. Attested His genuineness.
2. Expressed His value.
3. Revealed His truth.
4. Indicated His personal love.
5. Conferred His official authority.
6. Made His enterprise concrete, visible, effective.
7. Condensed and completed His whole world scheme and gave it finality, in the Person of His Son, Whom He

hath appointed heir of all things, by Whom He made the worlds, Who being the brightness of His glory and the express Image of His Person, and upholding all things by the word of His power when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high!

Is it any wonder that our text says, "Him hath the Father sealed?" Amen.

VI

THE MAN FROM HEAVEN

"As a hiding place from the wind and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. Isaiah 32:2.

This is the picture of a public-spirited man,—a man who comes forward to save society in disaster; a man who causes it to prosper and flourish in strength and plenty; a man who can offer it soothing, solace and consolation when it is weary. Such men are scarce—no matter whether they are beneficent rulers on the throne or in the Senate chamber whether they are leaders of industry and commerce, whether they hold the purse-strings of a nation, or whether they are its physicians, its teachers or its prophets.

The truth is that only a good man does good. Dissipators, wine bibbers and money grabbers are not such men. Ahab gave his heart to Jezebel, and stole it from his country. Sampson was a strong man but wasted his powers with Delilah. Herod listened to the whisperings of Salome. No man can dance all night and do his duty to the world all day. Joshua resisting the lure of gold, Joseph turning from the enticement of passion, Daniel refusing wine and the meals of a Persian caterer; these were men who helped the world.

God called Moses from his flocks, David from his sheep, Peter from his nets, Paul from his trade, and plain men from the fields, the sea, and work-bench, whose days had not been wasted in excess, whose instincts had not been perverted with pleasure, whose hearts had not been corrupted

by wickedness, to do His work of helping and saving the world. Yes and He still needs the man who yokes courage with opportunity, and is willing to bend his shoulder to the load, to lift the world out of selfishness, superstition and shame.

This is also the kind of man that the world has been looking for and that society needs. This is the real superman. He hides and secures the helpless multitudes; he shields his nation from disaster; he preserves those amidst piercing want; he waters the root and branches of their efforts, and renders them successful in their endeavors. He gives the workers restfulness and repose when they are weary. It is the aim of our educational machinery, our teacher-training and parent-teacher associations, our night schools and colleges, to produce such helpful men. And we ought to shout aloud for joy when such useful men, who bear the yoke of service in the good, grow out into the active life of our community.

But none of them,—no king, no senator, no governor, no capitalist or educator, can perform the universal service that is promised to the world in our text. We may look through all our institutions, our schools, our hospitals, our dispensaries, our charities, and our industrial plants, and we will not find the man who is the world's hiding place from the wind; who is the world's covert from the tempest; who is rivers of water in the draught-stricken desert; who is the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. The one man of universal world service and helpfulness, is the Man that God gave us direct from heaven. He is

1. A hiding place from the wind.

Do you know what it means to be exposed for hours to the keen, cutting blast of a strong chill wind? A few weeks ago one of our deacons told me, "I cannot work and lift

nearly as well, when I am out in a strong biting wind. It weakens me, and takes the life out of me." How many people there are in the world whose spirits are thus weakened and benumbed and who have the life taken out of them by some steadily blowing wind of adversity, by repeated failure, by injustice heaped on them from without, or by selfish sin taking possession of them from within. They try to resist. They walk briskly. They button up their overcoats. But the freezing blast is steady and continuous. It subdues them. They grow chill and benumbed. But God has sent a Man Who is Our Hiding Place. His Son has come, warm with eternal life, to keep us warm. He has come to open His pavilion for the poor and the fatherless; to shelter and protect those who are a prey to the mighty; to establish justice, to bring peace and uphold love; and to help innocency oppressed, blasted by reproach, or borne down by violence.

O Friend, when the blast of misfortune drives down on you, when the wrath of God itself sweeps over you, you have one secure shelter, one hiding place into which you can go, and that is—Christ the great Man sent from Heaven to help you and protect you. He will keep you unmoved by life's stir and strife. He will secure you against overthrow. He will hide you in the secret of His presence from the pride of man. He has placed His own body and His own Cross between disaster and yourself. He has overcome even the sting of sin, and the victory of the grave. Why don't you go to Him? Why will you freeze in cold and gloom and guilt? Why don't you ask Him

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me
May I hide myself in Thee?"

This Man from Heaven is not only a hiding place from the wind, but as our text says, He is

2. A covert from the tempest.

A wind is steady and continuous. A tempest is the climax and crisis. The confusion rolls around you, and threatens to engulf you as the swirling sands of the simoon in the desert. Christ is the covert in the great crisis, in the great uprooting whirling confusions of your life. In Him you can find shelter and to Him you can cling in safety. What a magnificant illustration of this fact we possess in the Gospel for the day. The waves are entering the ship. The disciples cry, "Master, save us, or we perish." The Lord stands up. He says, "Oh you of little faith." He turns to the tempest and rebukes it. And there is a great calm.

That fact is a picture of your complete safety, in the redemption wrought for you by The Great Man from Heaven. The sun may burn the worlds. The stars may fall. Your heart may cease to beat. Your body may be laid beneath the sod. But you are safe. You are in the covert from the tempest. The floods may come; the rains may drive; all outside may fall. But your house is founded upon a Rock. You have an immovable shelter in the tempest. You can cry in any danger

"While the nearer waters roll
While the tempest still is nigh,
Hide me O my Saviour hide,
Till the storm of life is past.
Cover my defenseless head
With the shadow of Thy Wing."

3. But this Man from God does more for us, than simply protect us. He refreshes, strengthens and prospers us in the quiet hours of our work and development. "*He is,*" as our text says, "*Rivers of water in a dry place.*" The first two clauses of our text were symbols of safety, the last clause is a symbol of consolation; but this third cause

is a symbol of strengthening, of culture, of growth and prosperity. We know what irrigation has done for California. It has made it a land of plenty and beauty and fruit and flowers. The broad flowing river, filled to the brim, ever moving on and on, constantly brings not only excellence and abundance, but freshness. The great springs out of a dry rock ever turn an oasis into a paradise, where the grass is green, the trees and berries grow richly, and the birds sing.

Thus does the Man, Jesus, sent by God from heaven build up human nature. He grows in us not merely the idle dreams and insights of the poets, or the hopeful thoughts of the thinkers, but the substantialities, the blessings of grace, the transfigurations of our nature and the fruits of character. God's heart is an infinite ocean of goodness and it flows forth to us through Jesus Christ. We often feel that our life is in a dry and barren place, and we thirst for freshening strength. We long for refreshment, reinvigoration, and encouragement. We need some one to buoy us up, to kindle new hope, to give us a fresh impetus. And such a One is the Man from Heaven, to them that are fainting, sorrowful, and distressed. As that abundance of water so close to Hagar when she sat down in hopelessness feeling that her child would perish of thirst, so is the Saviour to them that seek Him. O Friends, our Lord can restore to you, hope and strength. Rivers of water are flowing past you: arise, and wash and drink. He is ever clear and fresh and sparkling. Those that hunger and thirst after righteousness will find in Him all the building comfort and sustenance that a needy soul can desire. He is a stream of living water springing up unto everlasting life. At the well He said to the Samaritan woman, "If thou knewest who it is that speaketh to thee, thou wouldest have asked and He would have given thee living water.

Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give, shall never thirst, but it shall be to him a well of water springing up into eternal life." And what He promised her, He will also give to you. And now last of all, the Man from Heaven, in addition to being a hiding place, a covert and rivers of water is also

4. *A deep Shade and Peaceful Rest in the Burning Sunshine.* "As the Shadow of a Great Rock in a weary land." No matter how charming life is, no matter how beautiful the land through which we are traveling, we ultimately find our strength used up, and long to lie down and rest. All the more so when the world seems to us a wild and endless waste, when a hot sun beats down upon our heads, and a scorching soil is under our feet.

Behold following us there is a Great Rock, casting a deep cooling shadow on the burning sands, in which we may lie down, cool off, go to sleep and find rest and protection. That rock is Christ, who is ever with us in the vast solitude, and offers us the blessed refuge of His shade. Here then is the Man from Heaven Who is doing the most for the world, for society and for us. He is the Superman. He is standing between us and the fate of nature, between us and an accusing conscience, between us and the day of final wrath, between us and the terribleness of fear, between us and earthly disappointment, between us and the black waves of affliction, between us and worry and pessimism. He lifts us when we fall; He carries us when we faint; He spurs us when we lag; He warns us when we play with danger; He educates us out of gloom into peace and joy and hope. He checks the aggressiveness of wealth and passion. He seeks to end conflicts and wars and to put the world in order. He elevates our homes and institutions. . . . . Thank God that the world still has one Wise Master, Who builds and does not ruin. Thank God that there is an un-

selfish and all potent King Who has promised to save us. Thank God that above the clash of nations and the despair of men, there is a Hand stretched out in the storm, and a voice that says, "Peace, be still." Thank God that His Name is still above every name, and I am saved by Him.

"Dear Name, the Rock on which I build,
My Shield and Hiding Place
My never-failing Treasury filled
With boundless stores of grace."

Amen.

VII

WHO MAKETH ALL THINGS NEW

"Behold I make all things new." Revelation 21:5.

Evolution explains all things by law, agnosticism by appearance. Christian Science explains all things by thought, rationalism by reason. Materialism explains all things by force, socialism by social equality. Secret Religions explain things by the principle of generative life, Parseeism by the sun.

Christianity is the one and only religion that explains all things by a *Person.* "I," says Jesus Christ, "I am the Center and the Source. I am the Maker of the world. I am the One of Whom the Scriptures say, 'All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made.' Behold, *I make all things.*" What a joy is Christianity! It explains all things by a Person, and that Person is the Saviour. The world is not under a blind fate. We are not the creatures of chance. Life is not a brief bloom, and death is not a hollow ending to a period of effort and of straining. We and the world are in the hands of One Who knows and loves us, of One Who has shared all our experiences, save that of sin, and is eager to increase our common peace and happiness. Our life is in the hands of One Who makes things and can do things. Nor is His power limited. On the contrary it is wide and adequate, intense yet universal. He is One Who makes all things. Not law, but love; not force, but will; not blind fate, but knowledge; not scenes and seas and stars and

worlds, but a *Person* with a heart, with tenderness, with a gentle purpose, and with a glorious and beneficent object, is back of all things, is in control of all things, is at the head of all things. This is our joy, that our religion, as no other, centers in a Person;—a Person Whom we can trust, Who will do the right thing by us; Who will protect us come what may; Who is not only our Maker but our Saviour; Who is not only our Saviour but our Judge, and in Whose hands as Maker, Saviour and Judge, we are safe.

However, our text says far more than this. Christianity does not rest its hope in the present world. The present world has its bright spots, but it also has its dark ones; and the dark ones are continually eating away the strength of the bright ones. This world does not and never will be able to satisfy us. We are not really, and should not be, satisfied with ourselves. Look at our streets—are they perfect? Look at our politics—are they perfect? Look at our health, is it perfect? Look at our work, is it perfect? Look at our heart, is it perfect? Why is there jealousy? Why is there fraud? Why are there conflicts and enmities? Why is there oppression, starvation, deceit, lying, and hypocrisy? The world is worm-eaten. Something better is necessary.

Christianity promises something better. Behold I make all things *new,* says our text. Christ not only suffered and died, but Christ will reign. Christ came not only to justify and sanctify, but to glorify us. Even the last enemy, *death* shall be trodden under foot. All things new, all things perfect, all things glorious;—that is what the Christian religion looks forward to. All things new and glorious, the image of God completely restored,—that is what our faith in Christ makes possible.

The glorification that will come with the Second Advent of Christ is our great hope. What progress in beauty and

power there will be on that day when all things are made new. When the saints are said to "rest from their labors," it is the toil and effort of this life that are referred to, not the cessation of ever expanding activities, or constant progress in ever new enjoyments of the Life Everlasting. All the hopes and aspirations of the New Testament are directed toward the second coming of the Saviour and the inception of a new Heaven and a new earth. It is true that the most of us may die before then, and that we shall already be unspeakably happy or unspeakably sorrowful between the state of death and the resurrection. The moment a man dies he goes to Paradise, or to the miseries of hell. There is no waiting at the doors of Heaven. There is no door-keeper there. The Apostle Peter does not stand there to bar us out, or let us in. Christ takes us at once to Himself. But it is after the resurrection of the body, when there shall be restored to us the organ of our connection with the outward world, that the consummation of our bliss shall arrive. It is at the second appearing of Christ, that the children of God, seeing Him as He is, shall be made like Him. Our likeness to Christ and our sight of Him will expand our capacity to know and love and admire. Then will there be incessant revelations of what Christ is, and of what God in Christ is, and of new powers in us.

On that day also will Christ assign our eternal rewards. With death, we have entered into bliss, but its distinctions are not revealed to us, as occuring until all are judged for the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad. The Judgment Day does not settle to the child of God the question of his forgiveness, or his righteousness in Christ, but it does decide his position among the forgiven as high or low, according to the use of the opportunities that God has given him. "They that turn many to righteousness, shall shine as the stars forever and ever." Not until

Christ comes and makes all things new, can the account of each soul be complete, since it is only then that its words and works shall cease to bring forth fruit on earth. Men depart this life, but the influences they have started continue in ever-widening circles until the end of time. Their lips or fingers may have crumbled to dust, but the fruits thereof abide for centuries.

Then will the glorified be endowed with resurrection bodies. They will not be new bodies, but the same bodies, just as the body of the aged man is the same as that which he had in his infancy, though its appearance, its particles, and its functions are very different. They will be glorified bodies. The identity of our bodies on earth does not lie in the succession of particles of matter, but in the permanent impress which the soul has made upon the body, so that the body correctly expresses the soul. Their bodies will be spiritual, and endowed with new spiritual properties. The eye will have new capacities of sight, the ear new capacities of hearing, the will new capacities of decision and determination, and the heart new capacities of love. As glorified we shall love what God loves, see as God sees, and hate what God hates.

The new heavens and the new earth will be the sphere of our activities. We shall be in the society of the redeemed made perfect. The mother will find her long-lost child. The children will rejoice in the fellowship of departed parents. The family circle, once broken, will again be completed, except those for whose reclamation all efforts were unavailing. We shall have hosts of friends, with whom we have never spoken before. Every one who has brought a sinner to Christ will receive his seals of rejoicing.

There also will the wounds of earth be healed, and the divisions which separated children of God on earth be removed; and those who misunderstood and contended against

one another, shall be thoroughly united and with one mind and one heart shall commune and celebrate the common praises of their one Lord. There will be one fold and one Shepherd. All shall sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob. Yea, we shall sit at the Master's feet and the love that our hearts would speak, we shall fold in a lily's rim, that the lips of the blossom may offer it up to Him.

We shall come unto Mt. Zion, unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem and to innumerable hosts of angels.

That vision in Dante's Paradise of glorified humanity as a vast unfolding rose—on the stem of Christ—a blossom of which every petal is a soul—entrances one with its truth and beauty—all conscious beings at last blending in one glorious, growing unity of splendour and fragrance—a flower breathing back to God the Divine love which He has breathed into its heart.

This is the new life of heaven—a life in which the song of creation becomes the song of redemption. "Because I live, ye shall live also."

My dear Friends, it is worth while to be a Christian. It is worth while to go through life with this definite outlook of hope, to know that we shall be, not only safe but triumphant, in the arms of Him Who will make things new. Christianity is the only religion that centers all in a Person, that overcomes blind force and dreadful fate, for Christ is greater than force and fate. He is all and in all. All things were made by Him, and He is in control of all.

Would you rise and not fall? Would you live and not die? Would you triumph and not suffer? Then be a Christian. Are you a Christian? That depends on whether you have established a personal relationship to Christ. Is He your Saviour? That is the great question. Amen.

VIII

A HEAVENLY AMBASSADOR

"Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." II Cor. 5:20.

Ambassadors have played a great part in the history of the United States. After the surrender of Lord Cornwallis at Yorktown, it lay with Benjamin Franklin, Ambassador to France, John Jay, Ambassador at Madrid, and John Adams, Ambassador in Holland, to conclude a treaty of peace with England. So well did they succeed that the independence of the United States was acknowledged from Florida on the south to Canada on the north and the Mississippi on the west. The treaty was a great diplomatic victory for the United States. Instead of getting the Alleghanies as our western boundary, we got the Mississippi, and the way was open to the Pacific coast.

We all know what an important part ambassadors have played in the present European war, and what difficult and unpleasant duties Ambassador Walter Page in London and Ambassador Gerard in Berlin have had to perform to uphold the majesty of our government.

An ambassador is a person of the highest diplomatic rank, sent by one sovereign power to another to represent the rights and causes of his government, to offer settlement of matters in dispute, to bring peace where there was conflict, and to promote unity, good will, and happiness. An ambassador must be a man of great influence and strength. All the powers of his government are behind him. He is

the one man who stands up amid foreign surroundings and speaks and acts for his own sovereign and his own people.

There is need of an ambassador between Heaven and earth. Ever since Adam sinned in Paradise, there has been variance between the two. Truth has been injured. Justice has been maltreated. Right has been disregarded. Man has despised or neglected God's love. Even today the majority of men show no honor or respect for God, much less do they love Him, sympathize with Him, and co-operate with Him in His great plans for the world and humanity. Man's heart has been at enmity with God. He is not reconciled. This war has not been on God's part. God has made offer after offer, and appeal after appeal. But whenever God tries to make terms with man, man balks and turns away. And so as a last endeavor God took the step of sending a powerful and discreet Ambassador into the world, to talk with man, to deal with him, to reveal to him His own gracious purpose, and to make final offers and terms of salvation. As Scripture records it, "God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish."

Today is the First Sunday in Advent, and today we celebrate the original proclamation of the coming arrival of this great Ambassador to our shores. He is the Prince of Peace. He had a great name in Heaven, and His Name, though abused, condemned, and made vulgar and profane on earth, shall eventually become great in every land. "His Name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." "And the government shall be upon His shoulder," that is to say, He shall carry on His shoulder the responsibility of inaugurating the rule of God with all its blessings upon earth. Could any description of a great ambassador, with

a mighty mission to perform, be more beautiful, more sublime, or more accurate?

One would suppose that such an official from heaven would be welcome among the peoples of earth. But the contrary has been the case. All nations seem to have conspired to dishonor the ambassadors of God. Which of God's prophets in the olden time was not persecuted, rejected, or slain? Were they not stoned, beheaded, and sawn asunder? How continually they were maltreated in the Old Testament by the hard-hearted Jews: and this though they were men of power like Elijah, men of great vision like Isaiah, men of deep love like Jeremiah, men of whom the world was not worthy! And did they receive the Son Himself with any greater cordiality? Did they not reject Him and mock Him and finally crucify Him? Though He came as the great Ambassador of peace and good will, they dishonored His credentials and His mission and slew Him as a common criminal.

But there always have been some, ready to welcome the ambassadors of God. There are some whose hearts have turned to God, who have longed for life eternal, and who have gone to the Church of God and listened devoutly to the proclamation of His Word. There are some who have grown sorry for their sins, who have felt their need of help, who have desired to be saved, and who have longed to hear the message of redemption. They have listened eagerly to every proclamation of mercy that the Ambassador of God has made in His Name, and they have said, "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of them that bring glad tidings of peace, that publish salvation?"

The trouble with most of us is we are blind to the mighty power which these ambassadors represent. We do not realize that we are bidding defiance to the King of

Heaven, Whose voice breaketh the cedars of Lebanon, Whose hand controlleth the deep seas. We have never caught the sight of His majesty. We do not know that He bindeth the clouds with a cord, that He girdleth the earth with a belt, that angels who excel in strength cannot stand against Him; that from the lofty battlements of Heaven He hurled down Satan the great archangel and the mighty host of rebellious morning stars. Men and nations are so intent on their affairs, and so absorbed in their worldliness that they do not realize that the Lord by a word from His mouth can drive them before Him as the chaff is driven before the wings of the morning wind.

Those who do see this, are glad for the coming of His great Ambassador. They are happy for the terms of peace that are proclaimed. They are willing to accept the proposals which will save them from final disaster. They do not want the foot of the Conqueror upon their necks. Conscience tells them the Lord God is in the right. They have been made to feel that sin is a bitter thing. Their teeth have been ground with gravel. Their bones have been broken with conviction. They are ready to come to terms with God. They are only too glad to be approached. They cry like the Publican, "God be merciful." They do not desire with Dives, to be lifting up their eyes in hell. Their sins have worried them. Their eyes are full of tears. Their soul is faint. Hence they rejoice that the everlasting Son took upon Himself to deliver man, that He humbled Himself to be born of a virgin, that He overcame the sharpness of death, that He opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers, that He is even now sitting as our Advocate at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father, that He will come in the clouds of Heaven to be our Judge, that He has redeemed us with His precious blood and that we shall be numbered with His saints in glory everlasting.

Their heart goes out to this glorious Ambassador. They cling to Him. They call, "O Lord, in Thee have I trusted, let me never be confounded."

An Ambassador usually is welcome in a nation if the people know that he brings no hard terms; that he is not going to burn cities, nor drag populations away into slavery, nor punish with severity. Oh how welcome then should be the advent of the Son of God among us with His glorious and merciful Gospel. It asks nothing of men, but gives them everything. The Lord saith, "My oxen and My fattlings are killed; all things are ready; come ye to the supper." There is nothing to buy or prepare. The terms are simple and easy. The Lord Himself assumes all the expenses. What we need to do is simply and solely to trust Him and give ourselves over into His hands. We have only to believe and we shall live. No more penalty—it is paid. No more pain—it will be removed. No more death—its power is broken. No more tears—they shall be wiped away. The offer of peace, eternal, unbroken peace, is open to all. "Whosoever believeth shall be saved."

Our text says, "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." This is the great message, God has in Christ reconciled the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the work of reconciliation. The message opens with an assurance to calm our uneasy dread. "As I live, saith the Lord, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live. Come now and let us reason together; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." God wants to make us see that He is full of pity and compassion, that He is willing to forget, that He has found a way to meet the justice of the situation, and instead of punishing us, to put us among His children; that He has given us One Who will

carry our sorrows and Who has borne the iniquity of our race.

"Surely this is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ came into the world to save sinners." Christ dying upon the Cross became our peace. God is at peace with every man for whom Jesus died. Justice cannot punish twice for one offence. If Christ has borne the penalty, the law must let us go. Peace is made with God without condition, and is offered to us in the fullness of love.

There is not a man on earth, high or low, who cannot be cleansed from all his uncleanness, whose heart of stone cannot be taken away from him, and who will not be given a heart of flesh. There are pardon and new life for the degraded publican. There is pardon for you and for me. The Lord has blotted out our iniquities like a cloud. He has given His blood to redeem us. "Return, O wandering child of man, return, and I will have mercy upon thee. Whosoever believeth shall never perish."

Our text wants to assure us that this is not a thought of romance, but a very real fact. It asks us to believe the Ambassador, "as though God did beseech you by us." God's Ambassador comes to you beseeching. He beseeches even if your hearts have been hard and you have turned away from Him. He beseeches you even if you have been careless and given little heed to what has been spoken. He beseeches you as when a mother pleads earnestly for a child's life, or as when a condemned criminal beseeches the judge to have pity on him.

He beseeches you because He desires to save you from destruction. He beseeches you because He sees so clearly the end of worldliness. He beseeches you because He knows how much Christ endured, and through what contumely He passed,—and He does not desire all this to have been

for nothing. He beseeches you because He knows the divine love of the Father Who goes out after His son and pleads with him. He beseeches you because He knows the best robe and the ring are ready for you. He beseeches you because you are God's son, and because He understands the love wherewith God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin. He says, "My son, you must come back. I must have you. O, return to Me, for I have loved you with an everlasting love."

How our Lord besought the throngs as they gathered around Him in the courts of Jerusalem! How He called, "Come unto Me all ye that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. The bruised reed will I not break!" How when they turned from Him, with tears in His eyes, He exclaimed, "I would have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her little ones under her wings, and ye would not!"

He beseeches you with His wounds on the Cross, with the glory of His resurrection, with the power of His Holy Spirit that stands knocking at the door of your heart. Will you not listen to this Ambassador? Will you not give these terms fair and just consideration? Do you not want His blessedness? Do you not desire to be saved? Will you say "No," to His offer of everlasting life? Will you shake off the dust of your feet against Him? The flag of peace is still flying. The Ambassador is still here among men. His courts are still open. It is not too late to gain peace and life. His white flag is still unfurled in the breeze. There is still hope. But there is a day when this will change. When death comes the black flag will go up and it will be too late. When your eyes are closed in the last sleep, the Ambassador's voice will no longer ring in your ears. You may have had a great career. You may, like the aged Emperor of Austro-Hungary, Frances Joseph, lie

in state in a silver casket. Great multitudes may sing your praises and great pomp may attend your body to the grave. But all this is incidental and subsidiary. The question is, Are you reconciled with God? Christ has come as His mighty Ambassador and has made an offer that will fix you right, and build you up forever. Have you given this offer your attention? Have you learned to know the Ambassador? I trust you have, or that you will in the near future. Then can your lips sound out the great "Hosanna." Then can you follow in His train. Then will the flag of life be flying for evermore above your head. Then will the joyous shouts of victory be ever ringing in your soul. Then will you be able to join with all your heart in the mighty Advent song, "Hosanna, Hosanna, blessed is He that cometh in the Name of the Lord." Amen.

IX

THE GREAT COMMONER

> Then He took unto Him the twelve and said unto them, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished." Luke 18:31.

When great men come to the critical moment of their career, they sometimes have premonitions of the fate that will befall them. When Abraham Lincoln left his home in Springfield to go down to Washington for his first inaugural, and upon reaching Harrisburg learned of what was probably in store for him in the stormy streets of Baltimore, it was but a premonitory experience of the four years of danger, melancholy struggle, and sorrow through which he was called on to pass in behalf of his country. The fact is that from that hour in 1860 until his assassination in 1865, he had less than one week's satisfaction in his triumph of the ages. On Sunday, April 9, 1865, he had but five days more to live. On that day came the news of Lee's surrender to Grant, and he realized that his long agony was over. But it was only the briefest possible gleam of victory. Before another Sunday came, the country was enshrouded in a gloom of darkness the like of which this land had never known before, because Lincoln's blood had been shed by the hand of an assassin.

Today's Gospel tells us of our Saviour's going to Jerusalem. He knew what was ahead of Him. He knew that the critical moment of His life had arrived. He knew that He was really going to His death. Then He took unto

Him the twelve, and said unto them, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem, and all things that are written by the prophets concerning the Son of Man shall be accomplished."

Lincoln was born and suffered for the deliverance of a nation. Our Saviour was born and suffered for the deliverance of the whole world. Lincoln was a mere man with forebodings. Our Saviour was the Son of God who had become man, and who on this matter carried His Divine foreknowledge with Him. But the point is that *both suffered,* that both were willing to suffer, that both went unflinchingly into the darkness, that both were misunderstood by their nearest friends and advisers and practically had to tread their pathway alone, that both triumphed but neither remained on earth to enjoy the fruits of his triumph, that the darkness of the curse was wiped out by the blood of the innocent, and that the blood of Jesus Christ is so effective that today and so long as history shall endure, in every nation, it is capable of cleansing every one of us from his sin and of restoring to us our original condition of freedom in the love of God.

In the 34th verse of the chapter from which our text is taken we read, "They understood none of these things." This is all too often the fate of great men. They are not understood. Jesus was not understood by His disciples. Lincoln was not understood by his cabinet and his generals. Their very love and suffering for us, their patience under rebuke, their bearing of burdens on our behalf, their mildness and longsuffering and gentleness, as exemplified so wonderfully by the Saviour in His wonderful beatitudes, and by Lincoln in his great utterance, "With malice toward none, with charity for all, let us strive to bind up the nation's wounds," were not understood. As was said three thousand years ago, so still it must be said, "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether."

In strange harmony with these thoughts and our lesson describing our Lord going to sacrifice, the President of the United States has sent out an address from the War Department to all clergymen, in which he speaks of the selection of next Sunday as the day on which the French Government will present to the nearest of kin of deceased soldiers a diploma bearing the name of the soldier with a recognition from the French people signed by the President of the French Republic, and the inscription, "To the memory of this man who died for liberty during the great War." Here honor is being rendered to whom honor is due and the French Republic seeks to come into individual contact with the family of the lowliest soldier.

But it is a much mightier fact in the history of the world that the great God in Heaven seeks not only to come into contact with the lowliest and loneliest of every son of earth, but desires to make that contact so effective that He will provide for him an everlasting deliverance and an everlasting salvation; and that He sent as His special messenger, His only Son to earth, to make these joyous tidings effective. "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ died for the people. For all sinners, He gave His life. The wonderful thing about Abraham Lincoln was that he was a man of the people. The American people love Lincoln with a deep and personal devotion. There is a touch that draws them close to him, whereas the distance of dignity separates them from such an equally noble character as Washington, or from such a lonely President as Mr. Wilson. Whenever Abraham Lincoln commuted the death sentence of a court martialed soldier, he would entrust the message to nobody but himself. He took it to the telegraph office and waited beside the instrument until

confirmation had been received across the wires from the commanding officer in the field. His love for the people, and his personal helpfulness to individuals in distress, was a leading trait.

What is all this but a replica of our Saviour's identification of Himself with the people? He held aloof from the rich Pharisees and proud Sadducees. He told them when they made a dinner, they should invite the lame and the halt and the blind. When they brought to Him the poor woman whom they had condemned to death, He said, "Let him that is among you without sin cast the first stone." He said to the dying thief that repented, "Today thou shalt be with Me in paradise." He said to the repentant Zacchæus who was ready to restore fourfold all that he had stolen, "This day is salvation entered into thy house." He said of the little children, who were about to be pushed away by His followers, "Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven." And He said to the blind beggar Bartimeus in our Gospel for this morning, and whom the disciples wanted to get quickly out of the way, "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt. Thy faith hath made thee whole." We read expressly: "The common people heard Him gladly." It is a wonderful fact, that the Saviour of the world was a man of the people. We can approach Jesus, even as all could approach Mr. Lincoln. We can refer to Him as our personal Friend. We can look up to Him as in the companionship of personal leadership. He talks to us and for us especially. He claims us as His very own. "I am the vine, ye are the branches. Without Me ye can do nothing. Ye are My friends." He lived for us, and more than Lincoln, He knew that He was going to die for us. He came outstretching the help and the healing of His wings over all the children of our race. It pained Him exceedingly when they would not come. "How often

I would have gathered you," He said to His own nation, "under the shelter of My healing wings, but ye would not." What we need today, more than anything else in America, in our church, in our country, is men of the Saviour's spirit, men who live not for themselves, but for the people. We need men with the unselfish Americanism of Lincoln, who recognize the special rights of no class, of no single group, of no interest, of no division, but of all the people as a whole, that no individuals may profit, but that the blessings of freedom and salvation may be established and not perish from the earth.

Our Saviour went to Jerusalem where His enemies were thickest. He went to Jerusalem, where Pontius Pilate would judge Him. He went to Jerusalem, where the soldiers of Herod would scoff at Him, and maltreat Him. He went to Jerusalem where outside the city hall He would be uplifted on the Cross. His word was, "Behold we go up to Jerusalem." So Abraham Lincoln went to Washington; to Washington, most exposed to attack from Virginia and Maryland rebels; to Washington, where there were few, if any, regular Federal troops at the time; to Washington, not a hundred miles from the city where on that fateful morning the Massachusetts Sixth had been fired upon in the streets; to Washington, with no Congress in session and no money in the treasury; to Washington, with all the strong military and naval positions filled with soldiers who were his enemies.

Our Saviour went up to Jerusalem to carry out his divine commission in the face of his enemies. Our Saviour stood in the temple and denounced the powerful Pharisees until they withered before his scorn. Our Saviour faced Pilate and answered his questions with a truth that has startled the world to this day. Our Saviour faced the frivolous and pleasure-loving Herod with absolute silence.

Our Saviour catered to none, and made not the slightest concession to his enemies. Our Saviour was absolutely honest and open. So was Mr. Lincoln. "Honest Abe," he was nicknamed. And as we think of those terrible days through which he passed, it is the great qualities of honesty and earnestness that stand out. He went ahead slowly and quietly and fearlessly in the midst of the deceptive undercurrent about him. And as the years went by everybody came to feel that whatever his mistakes, he was perfectly sincere and could be depended on. By 1864 we knew that on his re-election hung the fate of the union. He alone had the strength and sincerity to hold it together and to see things through. And thus the world has now for many centuries come to believe in the absolute honesty and sincerity of Jesus. Even those who do not accept Him as divine and who are not willing to take Him as their Saviour, raise no voice against the absolute purity of His life, His motives, His heroism, and the greatness of His deeds and death. They are obliged to concede that He was sound at heart, and lived for the best good of the world. He had only one idea in mind, and that was our salvation. He wished to gain it not for any class or group, not for any party, or for the interests of the wealthy but for all,—poor and rich, young and old, native and foreign. Today it is only the death of Jesus that can save the world. The class interests of bolshevism, of great and predatory wealth, or of aristocracy, can find no comfort in Christianity. Christianity has at its Head the One Sublimely True and Honest, Who came from the people, Who spake of the people and Who wrought for the people, whatever their origin or occupation; but Who differed from Lincoln in that He came forth from God, spake for God, wrought the redemption of God, and was and is the Son of God. "Thou O Christ art begotten of the Father before all worlds, God

of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, by Whom all things were made, and Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was made man and was crucified for us, and ascended into heaven and shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end."

Let us reverence our great Leader and Redeemer. Let us be glad that He came for us common people. Let us commit our future and our country's future to His keeping; let us be true to Him in our lives; and living by His word become the salt of the earth to our land. And when He shall come in glory, when the news shall finally flash down from heaven that Satan has surrendered, then shall we be with Him in the victorious demonstration, and then shall we see with our own eyes that the kingdoms of the world are the kingdoms of God's Son. Amen.

X

A SOCIAL ARBITER

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana; and both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. John 2:1-2.

This marriage introduced Jesus as the Saviour to the social life of His day. Every age has its own social problems, and a study of the example of Jesus should help us as Christians to know how to meet them. The social problems of Jesus' day were unjust taxation, Pharisaic exclusiveness, Sadducaic broadness and free living, and class distinctions between the rich and the poor, the Jew and the Gentile, the pious and the worldly.

The social problems of our day are the problems raised by poverty, unemployment, unwillingness to marry and have children, the break-up of home-life, love of amusement and the streets, drunkenness, and extreme social inequalities. Many men and women are looking forward to a reconstructed society in which the heavy burdens at present lying on them will be lifted, and they themselves will enter a new world of freedom and happiness. Within the last twenty years a great change has taken place in the thoughts of the people. During this winter particularly, in the large cities of our country, the thing that pierces is the cry of the hungry, the poor and the distressed. We do not hear it so keenly here in our locality. In Europe in the war zone, multitudes are living from hand to mouth and having their food counted out to them day by day. Soon will come the appeals for those rendered homeless

and foodless by the earthquakes of the last few days. Urgent demands are being made of both politics and religion. The Church is being boldly blamed as not doing her duty.

Now what does the example of our Lord Jesus teach us on this great subject?

1. First of all it teaches us that happiness is not to be found in plenty of food, money, comfort and idleness; but in a soul at peace with itself, a soul redeemed by His precious blood; and a life lifted by love and service. He tells the people, "Labor not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you. I am the living bread which came down from Heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever; and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

Jesus shows His willingness to increase short supplies at the wedding, but He indicates clearly that life in its reality does not depend on $.90 wheat, or $1.00 wheat, and is not cut off by $1.40 or $2.00 wheat, but that we live, are strong, are satisfied, and are happy, only as we live in Him.

2. The second lesson we learn, springs from the fact that Jesus was a poor man. He might have come into the world as a millionaire, but He did not. He chose to be born in a stable. When His eyes first saw the light, He had no cradle, no table, no chair that He could call His own, much less a pillow for His head. He was brought up in a working-class home. His friends were mainly working men,—laborers and fishing folk. He became a public teacher, apparently without means. He had no settled abode, and when He died, He left nothing but His garments behind Him. You will admit that there was never

a more blessed life, but you will also acknowledge that it was lived in independence of wealth and position. He never worried about food and shelter, though as far as we know He never lacked it, except during His forty days' temptation in the wilderness.

The lesson of His life is not a glorification of poverty, especially such poverty as we see in our American slums. His was a clean, self-respecting poverty. There was sufficient for the needs of the day. What His life teaches is that it is possible to live the fullest, best and happiest life in very meager circumstances. It does not teach, however, that grinding hunger, hateful, unsanitary surroundings, and wearing one's life out to earn less than a subsistence, is a blessed thing. What He does teach is that independent wealth and position are not essential to a true life as God wills it. He teaches simplicity and supremacy over merely external positions as one key to tranquillity and happiness. He teaches that men are looking in the wrong direction when they seek to find joy in the possession of wealth, material comfort and luxury. He teaches that the true welfare of mankind is not to be sought simply in schemes for social betterment. One blessing in disguise in the war in Europe is that men are coming back to a plain and simple life. There are no more midnight revels in Berlin, no great social dances in Ostend; Paris is not filled at night with the lure of wanton women. People go to church and pray as they have never done before in their lives. Jesus lived, and we should live, *for other things.* He regarded the *spiritual possessions* of life as of supreme value,—character, truth and the will of God. To know God, and be happy in obedience to Him,—this was life to Jesus. It cast light into the marriage feast, and peace over the Cross.

3. The third thing we learn of Jesus is His emphasis of *Joy.* He has been called the Man of Sorrows. His sorrows,

however, were for others. He was often present at feasts, and He brought joy there. His first miracle was performed at the marriage of Cana. He ate at weddings and other festival occasions: His enemies called Him a gluttonous man, though the words were a vile slander. He had a far more sunny disposition than John the Baptist. He refused to allow His disciples to live a life of fasting, for they were to be joyful in Him the Bridegroom. He tried to bring sunshine. He did gracious deeds. He helped this family out of a difficulty at the very beginning of their marital career. He brought joy to the blind, the leper, the impotent, the paralytic. He wished to lift from men the burdens that make happiness impossible. He blamed Dives for his neglect of Lazarus, and He gave a large part of His life to misery and those who for extreme poverty, sin, or other causes were down and out. The Bible has nothing but blame for men who live to make money by compelling others to suffer, who take advantage of social conditions to grind down their fellow-men.

4. We must take a deeper look at Jesus' devotion to the outcast and the oppressed. Because they were not respectable, or even because they were public sinners, was no reason to Him for passing them by, and having nothing to do with them. Please notice that what He gave them was not money, but *Himself*. Money is a help to many, but in itself it is not the best help. It is not charity in the real sense. It is a poor substitute for a rich man to give in place of himself. He gave *Himself*, His own goodness, His own sweet heart, His own faith, His own comforting touch, His own joy, to misery, and to those with a loveless lot.

The average Christian is willing to let this work be done by missionaries and social workers, and then to blame the Church because he is being taxed so often to support them

in their work. Jesus gave *Himself* to the weary and heavy laden. He invited them all to come to Him. He was *on the lookout* for men and women who needed Him and with love He tried to draw them up into the hope and faith in which He lived. It is because you and I do not sufficiently do this, because we keep to our own class, because we sit in our own comfortable pews, and do not concern ourselves with what is going on around us, that the Church is blamed as a failure today, and that its enemies claim that it is subsidized by wealth, and only wants the higher and respectable classes in its midst.

Jesus preached the Gospel to the poor. He healed the sick. He fed the hungry. He gave friendship to the lowly. He restored self-respect to those who had lost it. He lifted the abandoned sinner to salvation. We do not read that He ever said sensational or shocking or funny things in His sermons; but we do know that He offered to restore the vile, if repentant, to sonship in God, to peace and blessedness. He had a mission to the barbarized, the bespotted, the enslaved, and those dragged down by the press of social conditions. And so have you and I.

5. Jesus was not afraid to blame the selfish hardness, the frigid respectability, and the worldly indifference of men to the sin and distress of those whom God still loves as His children.

He denounced the hypocritical Pharisee, the indifferent priest, and the cowardly Levite of His day. He rebuked His own disciples for their wrong ambitions. He uttered woes upon the wickedness of the cities, and he foretold the doom of those who would not leave their worldliness and believe in Him.

6. Jesus insisted further that the Kingdom of God is a spiritual reality. He declared it is not enough to be simply a good man, or even a redeemed man. There is

a kingdom here to which we belong, composed of those who are children of the one Father. God's grace works on men and makes them His sons and these sons are united in one kingdom awakened to the Father's love. It is the grace of God, working on the soul, and not merely better wages or the abolishing of poverty, that is going to save the world. Jesus says, "Without Me, ye can do nothing." We can have no hope of solving social problems without the Gospel of Christ. A man needs to be *born again* much more than he needs a new suit of clothes, or a liberal bank account much more than he needs to be cured of leprosy or of rheumatism.

7. And yet this kingdom is a regenerated society, a social system transfigured by love and mutual service.

We are to be bound into a brotherhood, instead of being alienated by class feeling, we are to live together trustfully in the peace of God, untormented by care, and each and all contributing to the common welfare as we are able instead of striving for our own personal supremacy.

The Kingdom of God is to be fulfilled by personal service on the part of Christ's disciples. Jesus trained men to live for this kingdom. He put His own Spirit in them. He implanted in their hearts His love for the poor, His unworldliness, His faith; and He sent them out to bring this kingdom into the lives of others,—to the poor, to the sick and to the outcast.

We also are bound to the service of Christ's kingdom and are constrained to spread it, to make it a reality, and to carry its brotherhood, joy, holiness and faith, to those who are outside of it. We are to be good Samaritans, to the classes in trouble. And wherever we have done some kindness unto one of the least of these about us, we have done it unto Jesus. We are to bring our love and faith into personal contact with the ignorance, squalor and vice

of the lost in our neighborhoods. We are to be a leaven amid the darkness and hopelessness of society. We are to bring our Christian convictions into school boards, charities, town councils, legislatures, business, and wherever we circulate. We are at all times to stand fearlessly for the rights of the down trodden. We are not to ignore any appeal for fundamental justice in our civil life. We are expressly told we must be considerate. "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye so to them." This is the golden rule of Christian living.

We are to apply thoughtful love to our neighbors. Our neighbors are those who need us. We are not to stand by and keep silent when those below are defrauded of health, wages, rights, or life. We are to serve the weak, and love the poor. We are to regard those below us as equals, and while respectful to those above us, are not to fall in with or condone their selfishness, their frivolity, or their monopoly.

Here is work indeed for every Christian, for every member of the kingdom. Much is above him that he cannot do, but there is much that he can do. Let him find his place and be active. Precious little will he accomplish without the love of God shining in his heart. But if he has such love in his heart then that love will make him a gleaming jewel in the brotherhood. Service, sacrifice, helpfulness, considerateness, tenderness, mercy, patience, good will, staunch conviction, trust, hope, in short—eternal life —will shine out from him into the dark places of life. If it has the light in itself, a golden arc can always shine, no matter where it is. It will shine in the court room, or in the counting house. It will shine in the bank or on the boot black's stand. It will stand in the lofty vaults of the domed cathedral, or into the darkest dens of the alley and the underworld. Men know and appreciate the light—

even if they shut their eyes to it, and slink back into the darkness. Yes, the Kingdom of God can regenerate society. It can send out the saving light. It is an Epiphany. It is a most glorious star which can guide and save the souls of many people.

"O Lord our God arise
The cause of Truth maintain
And wide o'er all the peopled world
Extend her blessed reign."

Amen.

XI

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE

"Then Simon Peter answered Him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." John 6:68.

The world is ever substituting cheap things in place of that which is good, genuine, reliable, rare or costly. Veneers instead of solid oak and mahogany; gold plate instead of solid gold; split leather instead of genuine calf-skin; shoddy instead of 100 percent wool; cornmeal and potato flour instead of wheat. Substitutes may be good, or at least endurable, in some lines of life, but the Apostle Peter is telling us here that there is no substitute for religion; and that in religion there can be no substitute for Jesus. He says, "Lord, to whom shall we go? In the greatest needs of life, where can we find anything or anyone else dependable? I have looked all around, but I know *no substitute for Thee.* Thou art the only One who hast the words of real, lasting and durable,—that is eternal life." The crowd was leaving Jesus, but Peter could not go with them. He had just awakened to the fact that Jesus had become "absolutely necessary" to him. He could not live without Him. No other could do for him that which his Lord was doing every day. It was a great discovery, and he burst out in the strong words: "Lord, we cannot go anywhere else for peace and life and happiness but to religion. There is no substitute for Thee."

When you once find that nothing else can do for you what some power is doing, and that what that power is

accomplishing, is something that must be done, you will hold on to it! If our army in France learns to believe not merely that General Foch is brave, but that he is the only man in all that land who can lead them on to victory, they will rally round him to the end. The strongest leaders and the most permanent institutions have no substitutes. Nothing can take their place. Our young men go into boarding houses and restaurants, but after awhile they discover that nothing can take the place of the old fashioned family, with its fine table, its comfortable beds, and its genial atmosphere. Our reformers and agitators preach wild doctrines of revolution, socialism, or anarchy, but in time of war find out that nothing can take the place of the government, and they bring the government and family back in honor; and recrown and rethrone them and are loyal to them with a new loyalty. I want to ask you this morning, whether the same is not true in religion, whether Peter's discovery that there is no substitute for Jesus, is not our own? Are there not certain things which religion can do, and which she *alone* can do? If so, if there can be no substitute for her, we may rest sure that however she may seem neglected, however her throne may seem dishonored, and though some men are ready to banish her out of the world, she is still our queen and will come back to a sceptre that none but she can wield.

To know positively that there is no substitute for religion and for Jesus is a help and a comfort. It cheers us when the interests of the faith we love, seem dark. It gives strength to many a soul whose confidence is shaken. That very power which men seem to despise, alone can do for man those highest and most precious things which it is inconceivable that man should ever cease to desire.

Now what does Jesus effect that nobody else can accomplish? He sets men trying to do God's will because of

the Redemption He has given us from the Cross. Religion is our service of God out of our grateful love for what God has done for us in Jesus. Christianity tries to save the rich and manifold life of man from dry-rot and destruction; and to bring every part of it to its perfection. Christianity attempts the thorough perfection of your soul. That you are a good fighter, that you are a good business man, that you are a keen inventor, that is what the world and its schools make of you. But Christianity reaches in and transforms your inner passions, desires, hopes, fears, capacities of loving, doing and suffering. Christianity touches every part of your nature and tries by the redemption and love of Christ to lift it up to its highest perfection—to eternal life.

Christianity alone has the words of eternal life. A Christian is a man who knows that God loves him. He has found that out in the love and suffering of Christ. He is grateful for that love. His gratitude is at the root of every act he does. And in that life of service, the fullness of his character is being accomplished. Is there any force outside of Christianity that can thus plant man into eternal life and bring him completed to his best?

There are two attempted substitutes that men use in place of religion: The one is *prudence*, and the other is *honor*. The prudent and respectable man, who thinks he needs no religion, comes to you and says: "A good life is the safest and happiest. If you do what is wrong you will suffer, therefore do what is right. It pays to do right." There is no love here, there is no gratitude here, there is no devotion to God, or belief that He has taken away our guilt, but only a cold business proposition; I do right because it will be best for me. It is a great system of expediency stretching out beyond the grave.

But such prudence is a poor substitute for religion. It is not noble. It has no enthusiasm, no all encompassing

love, and it is limited in its range. It does only those particular parts of goodness of which it believes that they pay. It is really selfish and low in spirit. Its idea is not to be good, because goodness is noble; but to be good to escape disgrace and punishment, to make one's position safe. Prudence may keep us out of many dangers, but it does not perfect our inner nature. It is no substitute for Jesus.

The other power that men think to be a substitute for religion is *honor*. It is that self-respect which makes me say: "It is beneath my dignity to do a mean or wicked action." You offer a man a temptation to steal in a war contract with the government. What will religion do for him? Religion will turn his back to it saying, "I cannot be disloyal to Him Who is my Lord and Saviour." What will prudence do for him? Prudence will turn him away, by saying to him, "You might be found out." What will honor do for him? Honor will flash into his eye, and say, "Do you take me for a thief?" Honor shines with a splendid luster. It is romantic. It is the power of chivalry. It is the fire of noble blood and of the gentleman. But when we come to analyze honor, and ask what makes it shine so splendidly we see that after all it is low and deficient. For honor is a conscience quickened with pride. Honor says, "I cannot stoop. I think too much of myself." Its very principle is pride. Honor is man's supreme consciousness of his own value. It is therefore partial and incomplete. Honor will not forgive an injury or submit to a slight. It has no divine standard. It brings no spiritual elevation. Only in humility does the soul lie open to spiritual life. Honor is a matter of moods, and with all its brightness, it is a cold thing. It is immeasurably higher than prudence. But it is no substitute for religion. It will not save either itself or the world. It is too proud. It often is ashamed of the Cross. It will not look upon

and repent for its own sins and failings. It never renews life and character. By neither prudence nor honor can you ever be born again. Prudence and honor are poor things, cheap substitutes for religion. For *their strength is their faith in themselves;* whereas religion's strength, our strength, is our faith in our great Captain and Shepherd, Who is stronger and better than we,—even Jesus, Who will send His Holy Spirit into our hearts to hold us steady in crisis, pain, bereavement or despair; and Who will build us up in grace and the power of the truth. "If any man will follow Me, I will save him, and where I am, there shall My servant be. Nothing shall ever pluck him out of My hand." There is no substitute for Jesus.

Who are these in white raiment—the really good specimens of life? "These are those who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." Who are those shining in the glorious and innumerable fullnesses of eternal life? Not those who are good because it pays; not those who are good because they are too proud to be bad; but those who are cleansed in the blood of the Son of God, and renewed in the Spirit of the Son of God, and filled with the love of the Son of God, Who died for all, "that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves but unto Him Who died for them and rose again." **Amen.**

XII

WHY THE SKEPTIC?

"Pilate saith unto Him, What is truth?" John 18:38.

Think of a judge,—an exalted official,—a representative of empire and justice, a man who should have been an expounder, a disseminator, and a pillar of the truth, turning to an innocent prisoner before him, and with mournful, sneering, bewildered sarcasm, saying: "What is truth?" That on which life rests, that on which civilization rests, that on which government rests, that on which justice rests, that on which the whole social order rests,—this lofty judge leaning forward toward his prisoner confesses with a weary and ironic smile, he does not know. He is a skeptic. He has education, he has culture, he has power, he has intelligence, he has a rather kindly disposition, but the one thing needful for his official administration, *justice* and *truth,* he lacks. "Pilate, you cannot act right and think wrong. Pilate, you cannot speculate on truth and keep alive confidence in your court. Pilate, your judgment-seat is founded on truth, or it is founded on nothing. Truth is given to be done. Life is an action—not a thought. If you do not know the truth; by degrees the truth in what you do, will become a falsehood.

There are many men in the world today who treat the suffering Saviour as Pilate did. They pity His situation, but they discount His truth. In a quiet way they are skeptics.

Like Pilate, they are public men. They know life.

They have mixed much with the world's business and the world's politics. They have traveled in many lands. They have come across a multiplicity of opinions, and gained at least a smattering of them all. They know philosophies and religions pretending an exclusive possession of truth, and how the pretensions of each are overthrown by the other. They are sagacious men of the world, the counterpart of this polished Roman skeptic on the bench. They are "too much behind the scenes of public life to trust professions of goodness or disinterestedness, or to believe in the enthusiasm of a sublime purpose." This is the liberalism of all too many a great man, be he lawyer or soldier, traveler or writer, college professor or cultured society man. He is possessed of an easy disbelief in the truths of the world unseen; and a sympathy for, a careless toleration of, and a half benevolent unwillingness to molest the Suffering Saviour and those who trust in the superstition of the Cross.

Some of these men are unsettled students of sincerity; but many of them are superficial and light-minded. They sit in their clubs and boarding houses and discuss and rediscuss the deepest questions with the same facility with which they remark on the gossip of the day. They are satisfied with a brilliant flippancy which treats religious faith as a phase of human weakness. Seeing the hollowness of great men around them, they conclude that all is hollow. Yet they are not without some troubled moments—it may be like those of Pilate's wife, in their dreams. Nor are they without an occasional sense of horrible insecurity, as their question, "What is truth?" becomes a sarcasm not on God, but on themselves, on human life, and on human nature, wrung out of the darkest and deepest bewilderment that can envelop a human soul.

To such men Jesus does not explain truth. He holds

His peace. Anyone who is seized with a transient fit of earnestness, and asks "What is truth?" without intending to give up his superficial worldliness, is not a subject, to whom Christ comes with His answer. Truth comes only to the heart in earnest with itself, to the soul that will flee from the hollowness of cultured doubt, and from the ease and luxury which accept the bad morals of the day, and shut their eyes to the purity, singleness, simplicity and glory of the heavenly life.

Why should Pilate be a skeptic? Why should a judge confess that he has no truth to look to, that he has no convictions, that he does not know what is right, that he possesses no God to lean on, that he is not a pillar in the world's order, that he does not take himself seriously, that he himself needs a prop? I will tell you one reason why. Deep down in his nature he is unsettled. He has nothing final to cling to. He has lost his faith. A man who has lost his faith, who has no convictions, is in a bad way when he must act in any crisis. And his work is to deal with crises. If a judge who represents the order of God, and takes the oath of God; who is dispensing the justice of God, and the knowledge of God, *has* no God, no real God, no Eternal center to which he clings, no Rock that is higher than man on which to stand, no belief in a final judgment-seat which will at last make all wrongs right, and reward all men, according to their deserts, what can you expect of him? He is a mere feather on the wind, a creature of expediency. He listens to the voices around him. He does not look up to the one unchanging Voice above him. He has only views and opinions to guide him. He is not in touch with eternal reality. How can his mind or his hand be steady? A double-minded man is unstable in all his ways. He is not of the truth. For "he that is *of* the truth, heareth the voice of the truth."

Pilate is such a man. He leans from his bench and wearied and perplexedly asks, "What is truth?" He is unable to decide his case. He has no real faith in justice. He is to be pitied on the bench. First he throws the blame on the priests—then he washes his hands before the whole multitude, and says, "I am innocent of the blood of this just person. See ye to it." And then in the next instant, he asknowledges that responsibility is all his own. He says to the prisoner, "Knowest Thou not that *I* have power to crucify Thee, and power to release Thee." First he declares Jesus innocent and then in the next instant hands Him over to be scourged! When that will not avail, under pressure, he yields Him up to be crucified, and then uses underhand expedients in an effort to save him. What a Judge! A man without faith! A man who has given up his hold on the truth! A man who does not know his own mind! A man who is unfixed—who has the power of the world, but is wanting in the power of the spirit and who therefore is driven by the opinions of others to condemn the innocent, knowing him to be innocent! My dear friends, that is skepticism in a nutshell. That is where the easy-going culture and liberalism of the day leads to.

Rob our young men of their convictions and you rob them of their strength. Educate and polish youth in this world only and they will listen to the voices around them only, and not to the Voice above. The man who lights his cigarette and sits down on the deck of his sinking vessel with no prayer on his lips and no faith in his heart, is no better or no worse, no more or no less, than the lion of the jungle who lies down to die. He is of the earth and falls back to it, he has staked his all on the busy present, the Cross has no meaning for him; he knows not the truth nor the life that is to come, so how can he know the way?

2. But there is a second reason why a man is a skeptic. I said the first reason is, though he has ideas and information and culture or polish, he lacks final convictions. The second reason is that such a man is not true to the convictions that he has. All men have a *conscience.* The reason some are skeptics is because they are *false to their conscience.* Pilate was convinced that Jesus was innocent. He had sifted and examined the case. He knew that there was no ground for the charges entered against Him. They were wild, they were the result of hatred. He knew Jesus was an innocent persecuted man. His able mind saw that the man before him was guiltless. After examining him, he even said, "I find no fault in Him." But he tried to get rid of the clear duty which resulted from his conviction of Jesus' innocence. He acted against his conscience.

And so any man who sees his duty clearly and violates his conscience respecting it, is on the high road to becoming a skeptic. When a man is unwilling to rule his conduct by the answer which his mind and conscience give to his case, truth becomes a burden to it. He cannot endure the truth—for he is unwilling to be bound by it; hence he seeks to get rid of it. He stifles the truth in his own soul. He extinguishes the core of his own manhood. He cannot face truth, hence he welcomes every avenue to doubt it. There are many liberal men today who call truth narrow, and right a dream, and morality conventional, and goodness a relative term, and do not believe in God, because they do not want to face him; and who refuse the Cross because its acceptance would compel them to go on their knees and repent. The man who lives loose, the man who wants a fortune quick, the man who is not clean and sound and calls it old fashioned to be upright, the man who would be fearful of a judgment to come, if there were such a judgment—

he can hardly help himself intellectually, he grows into a skeptic.

Pilate knew his act was wrong, but when they told him "If thou let this man go, thou art not Cæsar's friend," and intimated thereby that he would lose his position, if he decided for the right, he acted against his conscience. He stifled his convictions, he turned his back on the truth, and no wonder he said—"What is truth?"

Dear friends, blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the worldly-wise, nor standeth in the way of the doubting, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water gathering strength and beauty.

From the veranda of a pleasant residence at the northern entrance of the Suez Canal, you can look down and view that wonderful highway of water, with great steamships passing to and fro, bound for distant parts of the world, while across the long line of water stretches the vast expanse of sandy desert. As you gaze out about a mile in the distance, there rises before your eyes an inviting pellucid lake, on the borders of whose crystal depths are carpets of most wonderful grass and foliage. If you ask your host what sheet of water it is, he will tell you, there is not a drop of water nor a green spot there. He will inform you that it is an illusion—a mirage. And sure enough, before a half hour is gone, the picture that looked so real will have vanished, leaving nothing in its place but a barren waste of sand. O Pilate, O skeptic, O youth of life and power and culture and liberal outlook of doubt, glorious you seem with the empire of Rome behind you, and the elite of Jerusalem about you! But your heart is not right; you are violating your conscience; you are sinking down to sordidness. Poor Pilate, from the strength of the sceptre to the weakness of the sceptre is but a short

step for you. Your beautiful lake, your green oasis of life,—is an illusion—a mirage. You have no truth, underneath it, above it, around it! It will vanish as a dream.

"O fight your doubts and gather strength;
And do not make your judgment blind;
O face the specters of your mind,
And lay them.
Thus you will come at length
To find a stronger faith, your own,
Thus you will come to found your best, on Truth alone."

Amen.

XIII

THE SILENCES OF GOD

"He answered her not a word." Matthew 15:23.

It is my wish to turn your thoughts this morning to a consideration of *The Silences of God.*

Silence is a grand relief from noise; and after the heavy thunderings, unsteady vibrations, terrible explosions, wild excited barkings, and noisy rattlings that often greet us in every day life, oh what a relief, what a sweet and peaceful comfort, silence is! It soothes the nerves. It steadies the mind. It sweetens the feelings. It builds up fortitude.

"No sound of wheels or hoof-beat breaks
The silence of this summer day,
As by the loveliest of all lakes,
I while the quiet hours away.

Quiet and slow, by tower and town
The freighted barges come and go
Their pendent shadows gliding down
By town and tower submerged below.

I ask myself, "Is this a dream!
Will it all vanish into air?
Is there a land of such supreme
And perfect beauty anywhere?"

The silence of the scene is like a sleep,
So full of rest it seems, each passing tread
Is a reverberation of the deep
Recesses of the ages that are dead."

And if the silences from the turmoil of city and field are a great relief, the silences of harmony, the silent bars of music are even more eloquent, in their impressiveness of expectancy.

The stars are silent. The hills are silent. The flowers are silent. The night is silent. And they mean so much to us. Thank God for the peace and rest He has given us in the quiet hours, and by the still waters of nature.

Let us train our heart to cease its fevered beat, and our head to bow itself in sweet Communion with the Lord. "The Lord is in His Holy Temple. Let all the earth keep silence before Him."

God has spoken to men by His Holy Prophets, and in these last days by His only Son, by Whom He made the worlds, and Who is the brightness of His glory, and the express image of His person. He has spoken words of grace and love, words of consolation and encouragement, words of salvation and life, words of mercy and succor, words of hope and comfort to the dying.

And yet you surely must have felt that often God is very silent—that He is hidden from our face—that when we seek Him, we have no outward assurance that we have found Him. But probably you have never thought that *there may be reasons* for the silences of God.

Even we men are often stronger in silence than in speech, and even we, often have reasons for not uttering a word. Great men are often silent. William of Orange, founder of English liberty, was called William the Silent. General Grant was silent. Bismarck was silent. There are silences of restraint and repression that lift men far above the chattering, maddening crowd. There are silences of appeal that are far more full of life and tenderness, and far more eloquent, than any spoken word. The deeper the feeling the less it can be adequately expressed. "The completest joy and the profoundest sorrow both are silent." Have you never noticed the pleading look, the mute appeal, in the large brown eyes turned toward you by some dumb animal? You feel that they must almost burst into lan-

guage. You wonder whether the story they intimate, will ever be spoken in mortal tongue. And there is the silence of the heart toward that which is to it most precious. It is the name that is hidden away and never spoken, that drops into hiding the moment it is alluded to, which means the most.

Perhaps you have felt the silence of deep emotion where two have sat awhile in quietude and stirred some deep fountain of their speechless souls. And you surely have been sometime cut by the silence of deep contempt. Some one refrained from saying sharp and bitter things, but it was in their silence that they expressed their displeasure and scorn. You could feel it in the air about you, you could feel it in the rustle of their dress, in the firm tap of their heels upon the floor, in the flash of their sharp black eyes. You knew there was a thundercloud in the neighborhood whose quiet was portentous, and from which at any moment the lightning flash might come.

And then there is the silence of suffering, which with great effort, we respect in our beloved, and allow it that lonely liberty in which alone some natures can find comfort.

The silences of our Suffering Lord are more wonderful, than His spoken words, and the nearer His suffering approached its culmination, the more speechless He became. He hung for hours in agony upon the Cross, yet He uttered in all that time, amid friend and foe and the wild confusion below, only seven short words. His bearing of speech and silence was such that it impressed even the sturdy taciturn Roman centurion, who exclaimed—"Surely this was the Son of God." And in all this He was but fulfilling the Will of the Father and an old time prophecy, which said, "He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so *He opened not His mouth.*" The silences of the Son of Man who was the Son of God,

are most significant because of the greatness of His work, the richness of His nature, and the deep importance of all His relations to mankind.

Why does not God speak to you dear Friend? Why? Think of all the unconscious wants in our race, which are forever laying themselves before God. Needs which we do not know ourselves enough to apprehend, far less to understand; deficiencies whose worst defeat is that they are not aware of their own falling short; poverties which count themselves riches; sin which counts itself goodness; shame which imagines itself glory;—all these go with a pathetic urgency into God's presence and plead for a supply which is all the more needed because the needy soul is not aware of want. God answers all these prayers. We do not dream what God is doing for us. Blessing comes to us and we are wholly unaware of it or all that lies behind it. Our cries mingle with the prayers of a wide, wide world and God hears and heeds them. But if we are to live by the Spirit, if we are to live in faith; then we must *trust* God's love, and not want its continuous demonstration. We must learn that "not the gift but the giver" is the real answer to prayer. Not to get God's benefaction, but to get God is the true and fullest answer.

Oh how low and unworthy were the disciples in their hopes and desires. And all the Saviour's speech could not make them understand. Finally the Saviour said, "I must go away from you. It is good for Me to disappear, for when I am gone, I will send you My Spirit. He will teach you all things." And he did leave them. And the Spirit came, and they became strong. What they could not understand in the Saviour's Word and Presence, they now understood by the Holy Spirit working in them. They ceased being children, and became men.

So dear Friends, God withdraws His Words from us

that we may hear the Word of His Spirit. That Spirit is present with us today, and He speaks even to our soul. He gives us the things we truly need to know, and the blessings we truly need to experience.

The Canaanite woman came running to Jesus with her eager request. It was for her daughter. We hear her sharp agony pierce the trembling air. Her whole soul is in her request. Her heart tells its story. Then she pauses. The thing is done, and she waits trembling for the result. There is silence. Her heart beats. He answers her not a word. The moments pass and He does nothing. But as she looks into His face, she knows that she has found Him. The disciples try to get her away, but she will not stir. His heart is open to her. His look is gracious. At last she hears the word: "Great is thy faith! Be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

Many and many a prayer of ours, Christ does not seem to heed. He answers not a word. But why? Because there is something kinder He can do for us. How often we ask Him to do work, which we ought to do for ourselves. How often we ask Him to answer and we are not able to appropriate and understand His answer. We are not ready. More faith, more obedience, more suffering still are needed to put the heart in the right attitude. We ask and we do not realize the complications of the situation. Jesus may be writing the answer in the sand with His finger at the very minute of our appeal. But we do not see it. Our faith is of a low kind, our request is of a selfish kind. We want our will done and not God's. Oh, how hard to make us understand. And when He does give us our requests we go away and forget Him. We do not even believe that it was He. We say nature or chance or luck did it. We say the doctor cured us; and forget who made the medicine and the doctor. How often we are not ready for the an-

swer! How often we do not want the true answer! How often our faith is not that of the poor heathen woman! Not a word for her. Does she turn off in despair? Does she go away angry? Does she say, He does nothing for me? No she presses more closely through the silence. She worships Him and says, "Truth Lord yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." She clings. She is willing to take only crumbs—whatever He will give.

Oh soul, you may not get what you want—but you will get something better. You will get what is best for you—you will get Jesus Himself—if you will keep on calling when He is silent. You can and you will hear His voice.

"I heard the Voice of Jesus say
Come unto me and rest
Lay down, thou weary one, lay down
Thy head upon My breast.
I came to Jesus as I was
Weary and worn and sad
I found in Him a resting place
And He has made me glad."

Amen.

XIV

THE LORD AND HIS CHURCH

"Text—Luke 18:31; 19:10, 41, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47."

"Behold we go up to Jerusalem and all things shall be accomplished." Here is Divine Development. The world does move. History does unfold. Prophecy does become reality. Crisis plunges downward into destruction, by man's blindness; and, by God's sacrifice rises upward into salvation. The hour has come for Jesus and for Jerusalem. "Behold I will feed this people with wormwood and give them water of gall to drink. They shall bite with their teeth and cry Peace. The sun shall go down over their prophets and the day shall be dark over them. I will declare unto Jacob his transgression and unto Israel his sin. My fury shall be turned against them that build Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity." God gathers the elements in crisis, but we are saved through *sacrifice*. The storm brews over nations and generations till it bursts, and brings destruction;—but with it comes redemption. What is not destroyed, the Son of Man saves. The Son of Man has become our security, i. e., world propitiation. Not the blood of Bunker Hill or Long Island; nor of Britain or Normandy; nor of the Black Forest and Bavaria, nor of the sons of Scandia, but the blood of Jesus Christ saveth from sin and judgment and cleanseth from iniquity. He went up to Jerusalem, and in that day there was a fountain opened to the house of David for sin and for uncleanness; and the peace of Jerusalem was accomplished, and the peace of the New Jerusalem springs therefrom.

The world moves on the personal center of Jesus Christ to the last climax;—righteousness issuing in judgment, and love in sacrifice issuing in peace. The Chosen Christ and the Chosen City are a true picture for all time of THE LORD AND HIS CHURCH. In this picture we see the Purpose of our Lord's contact with history—SALVATION, the Progress of our Lord's contact with history through TRIBULATION, and the Lesson of our Lord's contact with history—OBLIGATION and CONSOLATION.

I. *"He is come to save."* This is the purpose of His Advent and the significance of His Cross. He is come to redeem a multitude that no man can number, of all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues. He is come to wash the heart of Jerusalem from her wickedness, that living waters may flow forth from her midst to cleanse and renew the salt sea of human life and re-convert its bitterness, its madness, and its malignancy. The purpose of Jesus in going up to Jerusalem, in entering into human history, was *to save the lost,* to bring back the peace of Jerusalem and to be unto man a Restorer Who not only reassures but renews and covers and rests.

The secret of our Lord's entrance into history, nationality, conflict, and development; the only explanation of His incarnation and crucifixion, is *salvation. "I am come to save."* The prior claim which Jerusalem of old, and the Church today, has to compel man to hear Her voice is *salvation.* This is the only balm of Gilead that the Church has to offer for the hurt of the daughter of Judah. For this reason the prophet says, "I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart, and give you a heart of flesh; and ye shall be my people, and I will be your God."

It is true that the learned men in Harvard, Chicago,

Leland Stanford, and other universities, holding theories of life, biology, society, and theology, whose principle is reason; and who preach progress through culture and development, rather than justification through Christ and regeneration through the Holy Spirit, have retired this balm to a back shelf. But it is also true that their new theories of civilization, which regard Christianity as a natural development, and the modernist interpretation of Christianity as superior to that of the Reformation or that of prophet and apostle, have been given a tremendous jolt by the terrible commentary on twentieth century civilization written in flames of fire, by the point of the sword, on the map of Europe and on the pages of European history—with lurid sidelights embracing scenes of mobs, lynchings, strikes, civic laxities, female militancy and social democracy.

The nations of the world are all too clearly exhibiting the quality of their Christianity. They are bringing their theories of spiritual and ethical value into the arena of reality. Christianity appeals in vain to the Christian powers that hold the sword. Evangelical Christianity is perhaps as little in control of public affairs as it was during the Crusades, the Thirty Years' War, the French Revolution, or under the sway of Frederick the Great, or Napoleon. The moving ideals of peoples called Christian are not really those of Christ. And the whole world has begun to cry that Christianity is a failure. On all sides the press has raised the question "Is Christianity a failure?" But is Christianity a failure solely because modern civilization has failed at the hour of test to preserve peace?

The answer is that any Christianity that has put justification and regeneration on the back shelf is *ever a failure,* in private and in public, in the individual and in the congress of nations. The war has revealed this one thing, that civilization as a human structure, ruled solely by en-

lightened human motive, *is* a failure. The failure of such Christianity, of a world-Christianity, is not the failure of the Holy Spirit, nor the failure of the regenerate and invisible Church. For the world Church today has put salvation on the back shelf, and has been concerned with human ideals and methods for progress. But neither human progress, nor humanitarian ideals, have saved the world from war. It is the *Son of Man in sacrifice,* and not civilization in development, that saves. England is filled with broadest culture, but is England regenerate? Germany is advanced in religio-historical theory, but is Germany with Treitzsche, regenerate? Italy is largely liberate from Rome, but is Italy regenerate? Is our American statesmanship regenerate, though it be less brutal than that of bigoted Russia, or fatalistic Turkey? "By their fruits ye shall know them." Have these nations the spirit of Jesus, the faith of Jesus, the salvation of Jesus? If they had, would not this war be a different kind of war; and the statesmanship back of it a different kind of statesmanship?

The world needs regeneration, more than culture. The one steadfast, imperative, and trying duty of our Church, in this day of cultured egoism and natural altruism, is to stand on her foundation: *Christ alone the Saviour of the World.* Salvation by faith alone. When the cultural works of the human race are like garments rolled in blood, the Church must more than ever proclaim that works without the faith and spirit of the Cross are dead; and that the only perfect life is the blood-washed and spirit-filled life of the Cross.

It is true the Gospel has never been, and perhaps never will be, in its true spiritual life, in complete control of the state. The kingdoms of this world always have looked to the things of this world. Force and not Faith, always has

been, and perhaps always will be, the arbiter of nations. Christianity at best has only been able to temper the affairs of earth. Earth is a mixture of good and evil. The temporal does not acknowledge the supremacy of the spiritual; but has ever entered the domain of the spiritual, and liberalized its principles into weakness.

Did Christianity in by-gone ages enjoy fair opportunity of transforming the State under the imperfections of a Constantine, or a Gregory, and does it have such in the diplomacy of the Vatican today? Has it ever had a fair trial from the Reformation to Napoleon? Was not the medieval interpretation of Christianity a failure as fully as the modern, and is not the modern interpretation of Christianity without the Cross a devitalization?

Are our modern nations Christian, in the sense of that Jesus who went up to Jerusalem that all things might be accomplished unto Him? Are the issues that have been left to this century by the Congress of Vienna, *Christian issues?* Has the dominating national policy of England at any time been Christian? Is the commercial or political necessity of getting a supreme place in the sun a Christian issue? Are our world powers Christians? Is not money everywhere a more permanent power than manhood? Money rules the satisfied rich, and the lack of it embitters the dissatisfied poor. Socialism is a problem of rights; its practical interpretation is in terms of money. Big business and little business have one and the same ruler. Is it the Lord Jesus?

Is Christendom Christian? Are the Vatican or the Curia Christian? Is the Christianity of M. G. Wells, of Bernard Shaw, of Herbert Asquith, of Nitzsche, or von Bernardi, Christian in the name of Christ? Is the United States Christian? Do spiritual motives rule? Does the President's Thanksgiving Proclamation command as much

respect and attention as his tariff position, his signature to the Reserve Bank bill, or his notes to Austria, Germany and Britain? Is our Congress Christian? Are our State and municipal leaders Christian? Are our editors Christian? Are our public morals Christian? Do our great pulpits, preach the Gospel of Christianity? Does our beloved country love God above all, and Her neighbor as Herself? Does not the average American look out for number one, as Adam thought he was doing; as Lot did, and as Jacob did? Many say our country right or wrong, but our country first. Many say our Church right or wrong, but our Church first. Is this Christian? Is not America almost as prolific of Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians as was Jerusalem? Is sin less flagrant in Chicago or Washington, than in the Garden of Eden?

Now if it is true that Christendom today in its dealing as nations is not the Christianity of Christ then how can we speak of the failure of Christianity as come to pass in the present war? It is rather the breakdown of civilization, of Christianistic education, of ethics without the Gospel of salvation. The European tragedy does not mean the collapse of Christianity. It means that *black* Jerusalem, God's chosen nations of the modern world, to whom the Saviour has stretched out His hand, and whom He would gather into safety as a hen does her chicks know not the things that belong to their peace,—at least in this their generation.

No, Christianity has not failed. Christ never guaranteed that He would police the nations; or convert the world. His picture of the end does not indicate that the world as a whole and as such will sit at His feet. His Gospel has not failed. It is stronger than ever. It has accomplished great things in history and in all nations even though it has not driven the powers of hell from the

diplomacy or the policies of the nations. Salvation has not failed, and the world needs salvation,—salvation from sin and judgment, not merely development. Behold the Lord shall be in the clouds and His chariots shall be as a whirlwind, and His horses swifter than eagles. O Jerusalem wash thine heart from wickedness, wilt thou not be made clean, that thou mayest be saved?

Meantime, the Lord permits us to go up in peace with Him to the Holy City, and to hold by faith to all things that are accomplished in the Son of Man. But meantime also searching questions are being put up against us. Why is the Heavenly City storm-tossed and sin-stained? If Christianity be not a failure is not the Church such? What is She doing amid the nations? Are we doing as the apostles did? Are we worthy of the Reformer whose name we bear? Are we discerning the things that belong to our peace, and putting value into the opportunities we possess? The Church must justify its existence by its acts. What is the justification of this great organization assembled here, of its outer progress, and its inner crisis? of its having endured for nineteen centuries as a Christian Church, for four centuries as a Lutheran Church, for a half century as a General Council Church, as seeing Him who is invisible?

Let us magnify our mission. Let us extend the life wrought in us by God through justification and regeneration. Let us go with Jesus to Jerusalem, let us call Zacchæus at the roadside and say, "This day is salvation come to thy house." And let us carry this salvation beginning with Jerusalem to the ends of the earth. We meet as stewards of the Church, which will respond to our decisions, our efforts. There is profound peace in our Zion. We are not bound to the chariot of any sovereign, nor are we the underling of any state. Let us not lift up our head as a

paragon of proud security seeking chiefly to advance our own position, our own comfort, or our own pleasure. For it shall come to pass in that day that the Lord will call another to our place and will clothe him with our robe, and bind our girdle tight upon him and lay our power in his hand, and he, and not we, shall become a father for the inheritance of Jerusalem and for the house of Judah.

II. There is however *No Salvation without Tribulation —No Redemption without Destruction—No Mercy without Judgment.* The words of the text have a modern sound a "besieged city"—"Things belonging to its peace," "Enemies come"—"trenches," "razed to the ground"—"not one stone upon another." It is a picture of war and destruction; not of a beatific but a bloody Jerusalem. Jerusalem was a walled fortress. She was besieged seventeen times in fifteen centuries. Twice was she razed to the ground before our Lord uttered the words of our text and more often thereafter. Few cities have been so often or so cruelly surrounded, so torn by faction, so sapped by treachery, so inflammable to riot or so drenched in blood. Similarly the walls of Zion which we love and which are dear to the Lord as the apple of His eye have been the scenes of interminable conflict. The picture of our Saviour points out the Church's *Protection, Destruction, and Correction.*

The nations of today are draining their resources to the last drop and are pouring out their richest treasurers,—men, cities, and historic foundations of many centuries for *Protection.* Their motto is no longer "Millions—but billions for defense." They do not seem to regard any expenditure too great or any sacrifice too severe to maintain security.

What a lesson to the Christian Church! Such earnest-

ness, such prodigality of grace and gift, such offering up of strength to the uttermost, what would they not do for the upbuilding and extension of the walls of Jerusalem? O that men's hearts and lives and strength and treasure were at the disposal of the everlasting King and His armies, as they are at the call of our government!

But government is law, and Christianity is love. Militancy is force, cruel and desperate; while missionary strength is fervor—warm, glowing, spiritual and free. Money, might and multitude, without heart, and soul and spirit are not protection. When the Holy City looks to material monuments and munitions as Her chief strength, She parts from the Word and the company of Her Lord. How vividly our Lord indicates as He looks at Jerusalem that Protection does not consist in trenches and fortresses, ammunition and guns. That which was Jerusalem's pride was not Her Protection. And that very often which is the Church's pride is not Her protection. We point to externalities, to great accessions of knowledge and to towers of wealth. And yet it was because Jerusalem had all these things, and did not make proper use of them, that Jesus wept over Her. O Christianity, Thou wert the strength, the light, and the glory of men; Thou wert the source of their habit and their faith. Thou hast been enriched with peculiar privilege. Thou hast been gifted with the song of the Psalmist and the speech of the prophets. Thou hast been tried and trained. Thou hast been charged with a high and sacred mission. Thou art blest with the presence of One wiser than Solomon, mightier than David, and nobler than Elijah. But O Jerusalem—Thy faith has become a formality. Thy Messiah has been robbed of divinity. Thy Scripture is regarded as the wall of an outworn fortress. Thou liftest up Thy head in pride. Thou seest not the day of Thy visitation. With Thy training and Thy

culture Thou art courting destruction. If Thou turnest not to the Son of David and to Him alone all Thy Protection will count as naught. The days shall come upon Thee that Thy enemies shall compass Thee round and keep Thee in on every side and lay Thee even with the ground because Thou, even Thou, knewest not the time of Thy visitation.

III. The King of Salvation Warns of Coming Tribulation, False Protection and Real Destruction; then He Advances to Correction and Instruction. "And He went into the temple and cast out them that sold and them that bought." There are ever those who commercialize religion. Their interest in the Temple and the Kingdom is getting gain. The Lord's Salvation is secondary. They look only at things visible. To such the Lord comes as He came to those in Jerusalem of old, with His rod of correction and His whip of cords. The unworthy must be cast out. Discipline must be maintained. The house of the Lord, the lives, the homes and the cities of the Lord must be kept pure.

We may not be able to control a corrupt commercialism in our own country nor may it be our part to tear down the altars of Baal with its gold and greed in public communities; but the very least we must do is to keep our own temple and our own house pure. The Church is the salt of the earth, and if it has lost the purity and strength of its savor it has destroyed its vocation and forfeited its right to exist. The Church is not the fumigator of politics, but She is the spiritualizer and the purifier of them that build and them that fumigate and Her virtue must be vitalizing to the touch even unto the hem of Her garments.

Is it right for the Church never to use a broom, never to disinfect, but simply to play into the atmosphere with

a spray of sweetness and light? Toleration of moral evil within the house of God is not one whit less dreadful than to neglect pestilential germs in a public hospital. Yet reform is not the substance of Christianity. Reform leaves the room clean but also empty. The Lord did not stop with casting out the hypocrite. He did not finish with raiding the den of thieves. His aim was positive. It was to build up reverence for the house of the Lord. He said, "My house is a house of prayer." But He made it also a house of *instruction.*

The main function of the Church is not discipline, and the chief zeal of the Church must not lie in the application of the law. Our Lord did not go up daily to the temple with a whip of scorpions. His scourge was extemporized and it was by the way. His regular administration lay in a higher and more spiritual sphere. Our text tells us *He taught daily* in the temple. Jerusalem's chief joy is not to fight, but to teach; not to burn but to build; not to purify, but to proclaim, to plant, and to make fruitful the blessed Word of God. The Lord doth build up Jerusalem. He doth desire Her sons to come from afar and the abundance of the Gentiles to be converted unto Her. He would open Her gates that they be not shut day nor night. He would have violence do no more hurt in Her land, nor waste nor destruction, within Her borders. He would call Her walls Salvation and Her gates Praise. He would have Her people all righteous. For Zion's sake He will not rest until His salvation goes forth from her as a lamp that burneth, until She shall no more be termed forsaken but shall be a crown of glory and a royal diadem in His hand.

The Lord has been good unto His City. He has granted us the investiture of His robe, and strengthened us with the strength of His girdle. He has put in our hands the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and permitted us to open and

close it. Ours is the door, the robe, the girdle, the nail. Ours is the open door, free justification for all. In Christ all are just and equal. In Him there are no titled nobility, no men of privilege no distinctions founded on wealth, and none on idleness. In Him all have equal opportunity to succeed according to the measure of their ability.

The Lord has girded the Church with a girdle, a girdle to hold and brace, a basis of strength. He has bound His Church together in a constitution and discipline, a constitution determined not by one mind, or any one moment, or any one idea, or by untried theories, or by the will of the people in one moment; but by the will of the people as it has been founded in the Word of God and equally and definitely laid down in a wide experience.

The treasures of the Son of David, His Word and Sacraments, are unlocked and administered, for the maintenance of faith and life, in a freedom guaranteed by our national Constitution which the State can never seize and the Body Politic never pervert. Surely here in America we ought to be glad to bear the investiture of citizenship in the Jerusalem above, where the government is on the shoulder of the Prince of Peace, where the girdle of strength is the Word of Truth, and where Heavenly freedom, life and joy, are the gift of Him Who is Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.

But *Salvation* brings *obligation*. They went with Jesus into the city and rejoiced. They strove with each other for His right hand and His left. Yet in the Day of Visitation they closed their eyes and fled and left Him to His fate. Is that what we will do?

To His Church in trying times, on the eve of a century-long and world-wide celebration of the great Reformation of Zion, to us of the General Council our Lord says, "Be thou faithful unto death." Be not weary of the monotony

of fidelity; feel not cramped from the toil in the trenches. Grow not restive under the authority of Scripture and the accomplishment of prophecy. Fear not the ridicule of the followers of Baal. Fall not back in the hour of assault, of forced marches, of sleeping on the ground, of hard tack and impoverishment. Some of you have suffered as veterans and have lost in sacrifice after sacrifice. Some of you have hesitated lest you be on the losing side, and have been approached to become unfaithful in defeat, deserting the Lord when needed most. Will you not hear the appeal of Jerusalem in her weakness, and heed the command of the Lord in His strength?

Do you not thank God for the Fathers who stood for the truth which made them free? Will not the General Council, your synod and my synod, your congregation and mine, your heart and mine, renew its pledge of fealty to Him who saved us, who suffered and died that we might live, and who hath charged us: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." O Jerusalem, you would not; you knew not your visitation. But O Lord Jesus, *we* will. We hear our Shepherd's voice and we know the things that belong to our peace.

And the aim is *our Consolation.* As we suffer with our Lord in tribulation, so shall we share with Him in consolation. As we participated with Him in the earthly so shall we in the Heavenly. As we entered the Jerusalem that now is, so shall we be welcomed by Him in the Jerusalem above. He will console, He will transfigure, He will open to us a goodly fellowship, He will provide us a place and a habitation. He will fill us with jubilation. Love shall break forth into praise with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Then shall we behold the consummation, the great God becoming visible in the majesty of His perfection. Then shall the whole creation, hitherto groaning and travailing,

be cleansed and purified into a new order of things and bloom in unfading splendor. Then shall the glorious liberty of the children of God be proclaimed and Christ shall fill all creation with His fullness.

Then unto us shall be the privilege of adoration. Then shall we commune with the Lord face to face. Then shall we see Him as He is. Then shall we share in the general glorification. The Holy City shall be adorned as a bride and we, transfigured in the presence of Him Who is the Light thereof, shall bear the image of the Heavenly, receive the crown that is incorruptible, and shine in the liberty, the luster, and the love of Him who hath saved us. Yes, and then we shall have the satisfaction of rejoicing in the final culmination, that all things shall have been accomplished by the Son of Man, when the last enemy shall have been swallowed up by victory and the smoke of battle shall no longer hide the brightly waving flag of truth, when the springs of doubt shall no longer poison the rivers of life, when all nations shall bow before the Lord, when the kingdoms of the world shall be the kingdoms of His Son, and God shall be all in all! Amen.

XV

OUR CRISIS AND OUR CONQUEROR

"Text—Isaiah: Chapters 33 and 35."

This is the promise of the greatest prophet of the Old Covenant. It lifts the clouds of warfare and worriment, and vouchsafes a Vision of the Future. It reveals the King in His beauty, the Land that is far off, the Church in Her unfolding from the robes of affliction, and the redeemed who have passed all crises and found the way of entrance into joy and gladness.

These high words of comfort, based on firm confidence in God, breathing a boundless hopefulness, embodying glowing visions of the future, unsurpassed in vigor, trust, joyousness, breadth and splendor of outlook, heartening a people prone to put its trust in princes and eager to call in the aid of Egypt against the rude and ruthless invader from the Euphrates, present to us a sublime picture of the Church of Christ in the world-crisis of the present moment. I see in them:

A PICTURE OF THE TIMES.

A PICTURE OF OUR CHURCH IN THE TIMES.

A PICTURE OF SPIRITUAL PREPAREDNESS.

A PICTURE OF THE CONQUEROR FOR THIS CRISIS.

A PICTURE OF THE PERMANENCY OF HIS REALM, AND

A PICTURE OF THE TRANSFORMATION AND

GLORIFICATION OF THE RETURNING AND VICTORIOUS CHILDREN OF HIS KINGDOM.

I. A moment of tensity beats and throbs beneath the surface of our text. Our very first look at it conveys to us a *Picture of the Times.* "The earth moaneth and languisheth." The world today is filled with convulsion, commotion, irregularity and sorrow. "Lebanon is hewn down." Our natural resources of forest, minerals, coal and oil, are being cut down and are rapidly approaching exhaustion. "Sharon is like a wilderness." The world's harvests are not being planted, and its grazing areas are being bereft of live stock. "The ambassadors of peace weep bitterly." The Hague conventions and all hopes based thereon have failed. "The highways lie waste," Commerce is interrupted. The high seas are trails of blood and tremendous wastage. The railways are commandeered for military purposes. "The wayfaring man ceaseth." There is no travel. Even passports will not bring our missionaries to their goal.

The General Council convenes today amid the greatest crisis of a thousand years. Two thousand years ago Christianity came as the Dayspring from on high. One thousand years ago its self-appointed representative of Christ on earth had so wrought out and embodied on earth the universal city of God that kings and emperors bowed the knee before him. Four hundred years ago a new prophet, with his doctrine of a free faith, a free conscience, a free Word of God, a free priesthood, and a free salvation, shook that fabric of universal earthly ecclesiastical rule, and inaugurated a new order. Three hundred years ago the first followers of Luther appeared on the shores of North America. Two hundred and seventy-five years ago these teachings were planted on the shores of the Delaware and the Schuylkill. The first settlers of Pennsyl-

vania were Lutherans. The first sacred building erected in this state was a Lutheran Church. The first book in North America to be translated into the language of the Indians was Luther's Catechism. Two hundred and thirty-three years ago the first English Lutheran services in America were held in this city a little to the north of us. Two hundred years ago the first Lutheran minister, probably the first Protestant minister in America, was ordained to the south of us in the Lutheran Gloria Dei Church, still standing in South Philadelphia. One hundred and seventy-five years ago the Patriarch of our Church in this country arrived, and six years later organized the Lutheran Ministerium of Pennsylvania and North America, the Mother Synod of the General Council. He was the pastor of this Zion Church, his central congregation, and his activities extended from Georgia and the Shenandoah Valley on the south, to Albany on the north. He and his sons during the American Revolution, and the whole Lutheran Church, supported George Washington and the Congress that met in Independence Hall. It was in the great church building of this congregation that Richard Henry Lee of Virginia uttered his funeral oration over Washington, and described him as "First in war, first in peace, and first in the hearts of his countrymen." In three years it will be one century since our Church branched out into universality in this land and the first General Synod of Lutherans was organized. It is now just one-half century since our own great Lutheran body, convening today with representatives present from Vancouver on the west to Nova Scotia on the east, and from Texas, Porto Rico, and the Virgin Islands on the south was organized. We are thus celebrating many anniversaries: The four hundredth of the birth of our Church, the three hundredth of its first appearance in North America, the two hundred and thirty-third of the

birth of English Lutheranism, the one hundred and seventy-fifth of the arrival of the pastor of this congregation and the organizer of the Lutheran Church in this country, the one hundredth of the specific organization of the first national body of Lutherans, and the fiftieth, the Golden Jubilee of the body that meets here today. And we are doing it at a moment when the Lutherans of this country, are making an effort to measure up to their past and to cement their present unity by organizing the United Lutheran Church in America.

We are doing it also during the greatest political and religious crisis of many ages, when the world principles of the political life of peoples are being tested, when the empires of medieval traditions and convictions are being found wanting, when the prevailing methods of social and political organization, the accepted conditions of associated action, the very foundations of individual action and collective authority, are being shaken; and a new earthly order of some kind seems about to arise on the ruins of the old. The oldest and once universal Christian organization on earth, has not been slow to recognize the magnitude of this crisis, and the Pope's effort at intervention in the war rises from a large historical perspective as the most startling effort since medieval days of the Vicar of Christ on earth, to compose the nations on the basis of a universal spiritual authority superior to the authority of the State, with right of ultimate directorship in the affairs of nations. Secular authority, has its own hands more than full with protest and anarchy in the vitals of the old monarchies and various uneasy symptoms in the social relations of free and purely democratic nations. It also is being tested in its foundations. This is a day of crisis for the race in which not only the Americas and Europe, but the whole Orient, and all the missionary operations of the Church are involved.

The ultimate question to be settled is that raised at the Tower of Babel in olden days,—Is the religious and political freedom of man, that of the man described by Martin Luther in his immortal tractate of 1520, to abide; or must it, and with it modern society, succumb to a glorified incarnation of successful force? These are the times in which we live.

II. And from them we turn to *a Sketch of the Church in Our Times.* "The Lord will save us. He hath filled Zion with righteousness. Wisdom shall be the stability of thy times, and strength of salvation." The purpose of the Lord is *to save.* That *He* will save us and that we are standing on a rock that is higher than we is our secret of tranquillity in these trying days. If it is *God* that justifieth, who is He that condemneth? He has sent His Son to save us, and that Son has become our righteousness. Thus He hath filled His Zion with righteousness. It is Zion's call to proclaim and apply and make it effective. The Word of the Lord in the Church, which was not bound in the dark day of Isaiah, whose inspired vision rose on eagle's wings so that he became the great world prophet of the ages, is still active in all its power among us. The Word of God is not only the real stabilizer of the times furnishing wisdom, but it is the *strength of salvation.* Salvation in this world-crisis is to be found in Zion, and nowhere else.

The prophet meant to proclaim to his countrymen that righteousness was the nation's salvation. We need that doctrine in America, in our homes, in our training camps, in our government offices, in our Army and Navy, in our colleges, and above all in Zion herself. The ultimate fate of mankind will not be settled favorably if religious issues are ignored, and Zion becomes a mere literary candlestick

without the burning flame of spiritual power. Neither the manhood of the physical brute, nor the manhood of inventive and deliberative reason are going to settle the final problems of war or peace. We need the manhood of faith, the manhood of spiritual character, the manhood which is grounded in eternal reality. Nothing will be settled if the Spirit of the Lord, and His redemption are overlooked.

And *Zion is here to see that it is not overlooked.* This is our work. This is our high calling in these times. This is the vocation of the Church. Hence, as our text says, the Lord must be exalted. The Church must be filled with judgment and righteousness. The wisdom that cometh from above must compose the nations, the relation of all peoples to their God must be made the foundation of the stability of the times. This is the divinely appointed work of the Church, which is the holy hill, set up amid the lesser hills of earth. But if Zion is to fulfill her vocation today, she must busy herself with preparedness.

III. And this brings us to the third picture of the text: *A Picture of Spiritual Preparedness.* "Now will I rise, saith the Lord. He that walketh in righteousness shall dwell on high. His place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure."

The call to action rings out loud and clear: the Lord Himself utters it, and responds. A God that does not hate evil and is indifferent to good, is not our God. Our God's opposition to evil is everlasting. His first word to us is, "Walk in righteousness!" Righteousness is the only impregnable defense in heaven and on earth. To live and move and have our being in the right, to become perfected in it, to be able to maintain it under strain, and to "walk" in it, is Preparedness.

Our own first step in this preparedness is to *occupy high ground.* "He shall dwell on high." We are to select some high spot, as the site upon which our dwelling is to be perched. This Church of ours, needs to occupy the high places above the turmoil and dust of the times. She must be the Lighthouse of the world. She must be "a city that is set on a hill." Her permanent location on the lofty rock of God's truth must be assured. She must dwell above the world, in communion with God, in broad and unrestricted outlook into the ages, in wide views, in a telescopic vision of the winding course of the streams beneath, estimating how small in their true perspective are the noisy things of the plain, and how little the ascent of the aeroplane counts in a journey toward the sun. We must locate the Church aright, high upon the mountain of God's truth.

When our Church comes forth, she must bear the marks of that serene region where there is no tumult and where nothing unclean or vicious can live. Christianity implies elevation of thought and walk, of dwelling in the presence of the unseen, of conversation, and character perfected in the Mount. It implies the Temple on Zion, the Altar in the Holy Place, that is the Cross on Calvary, and conversation with the Heavenly Jerusalem.

God preserve us from a *sordid* Church,—a Church that pitches Her tent in Sodom, a Church that gets Her illumination from beneath, from the footlights of the playhouse, from the lamp-posts of politics, or from the Roman candles of momentary spectacular success.

It is a life location on the high place that gives the Church Her elevation in faith, Her ideals of perfection, Her freedom in the good, Her prestige in the social order, and Her abiding relationship in Christ which enables Her to purify society, and to civilize the savagery and the culture of men into harmony with the personality of God.

It is the height of religion that brings stability to a nation. An irreligious nation has the elements of dissolution within itself. It is the high places of religion that produce the best morals, because they provide an authoritative principle, and a spirit of power. Religion puts substance into the otherwise empty form of liberty. Wherever religion degenerates, the existence of freedom is endangered.

The heights are *Places of Purity,* on whose clear summits smut and dust are unable to gather, which foul floods cannot overflow with their filthy flotsam. Upon the high mountain under the blue sky the sun shines clear, and the freshening breezes blow, far above the debris of a wrecked humanity, and the low-lying clouds whose bosoms are heavy with soot and vapors and sulphur. On the heights, the Lord of hosts will dissolve the veil that is spread over the nations, and will swallow up death with victory. The Lord's house is established in the top of the hills, and is exalted among the mountains and all nations shall flow unto it. Let us go up to the mountain of the Lord. There we will rejoice greatly, for He hath clothed us with the garments of salvation. He hath covered us with the robe of righteousness. We will not hold our peace, until the righteousness of Zion goeth forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as the lamp that burneth, and the Gentiles shall behold this righteousness, and we shall be called a holy people, the redeemed of the Lord, a city not forsaken. It is through our Lord that we are able to dwell upon the height, that we have access to the glorious city of God, set upon the hills. It is through His offering upon the altar that there are open to us the gates of the Heavenly Jerusalem.

In the second place, His righteousness is our sure refuge. In the east, and in all unsettled countries, the sites

of the cities are on the hill tops, thus securing their inhabitants against the invading and marauding armies that make swift progress only by following the broad roads in the lowlands. The second stage in preparedness then is to build up *Security* through adequate *Protection.*

In the life of nations, nearly everything is in danger. Our gold and our property are not secure. Our good name and reputation are not secure. Sanitation has done much for our health, and surgery and antiseptics very much for the preservation of our life. Nevertheless, it still hangs upon a thread. Our daughters are not secure against the lure of the military uniform, and our sons are subject to the draft, and later to the fortunes of war. And what extraordinary preparation, and what ample sums, and what Herculean endeavors are being made in our campaigns of preparedness, to put us in an adequate state of national defense! The highest preparedness however, is that which must be furnished by the Church, which dwelleth on the lofty height. Neither walls of stone, nor elaborate systems of trenches, nor works constructed of entanglements and cement, can compare for defense with the Alpine heights, which the Lord God Himself erected. And it is His defenses which the dweller in the high places of the spiritual world is able to utilize, and which are impregnable. "His place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks." "They that put their trust in the Lord shall not perish, but shall abide forever, as Mount Zion. As the hills are around Jerusalem, so is the Lord round about His people.

The sceptre of the godless shall not wield its sway over the little flock of the righteous. They have a door of defence to their sheepfold which keeps out the thief and the murderer. They can go in and out in peace and pleasure. Their defence is the One Who has come, that they might have life and have it more abundantly. Through Him we

are permitted to lie down in green pastures. We fear no evil. His rod and His staff they comfort us.

The third element in the Church's preparedness is the assurance of *Abundant Provision.* "Bread shall be *given* him; his waters shall be sure." We come here upon the weak point of the man who dwells upon the heights. He raises no crops. No rivers of water run by his door. He easily finds himself in want of the two great necessities of life, of bread and of water. He can be starved out by the beleaguering host.

Today we are confronted more vividly than for generations with the fact that the question of food is the great question of life. Even with our millions of fertile acres, and our tremendous harvests, there is a world shortage of food. Multitudes are starving. Prices are soaring. Washington is impressing the slogan "Save food" upon our public hostelries and private families. The life question of the army is not a question of munitions, but of food. The government must commandeer supplies. Food is the primal necessity.

It is not so in the high places of Jerusalem. God has made ample provisions for supplies to the Church that dwells upon His heights. He who dwells in God needs no elaborate pipe lines. He is close to living fountains. Though all springs in the land be stopped, His waters shall be sure. "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the camps of the Most High. God Himself is in the midst of Her. She shall not suffer. God shall help Her, and that right early." He has made provision for fullness of bread, a bread that does not grow up out of the earth beneath. He hath provided the Bread that cometh down from heaven. He says, "I am the Bread of Life. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst." The day always

dawns in every land when the Lord sends a hunger which is not for bakers' loaves, and a thirst which is not for waters from earthly springs, but which is a hunger and thirst for the Word of God. Upon the mountains of God there are fruitage and fountains in abundance, and blessed are they who eat their bread in the Kingdom of God. What earthly water supply can compare with the living stream, clear as crystal, that flows forth from the throne of God? And what harvests upon earth can compare with the trees of life on this river, which bear monthly fruitage, and whose very leaves are for the healing of nations? What a picture of preparedness, applicable to our own times, and which the Church is to apply, the prophet of many ages ago foresaw, in the riches that are to be found in Christ!

IV. And He goes a step further. He passes from the defensive to the offensive, and presents us with *A Vision of the Conqueror for this Crisis.* "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty: they shall behold the land that is very far off." Zion found Herself beleaguered. She was in trepidation, and saw no deliverance. Her King stood helpless in his humiliation. His eye could not go beyond the city walls. His vision was hemmed in on every side. For the Assyrian had invaded the land. Gold stripped from the Temple walls did not placate the invader. O distressed Zion! Many of her sons were in despair. Some were apathetic, and others devious in treachery. There was no burning center of love and loyalty. The king disrobed and covered his glory with sackcloth. Then Isaiah, the prophet of the Lord, stepped forth and bade Zion take heart and hope. He said, "O Israel, thine eye shall see thy king disenthralled. His glory shall pervade every part of the realm. Thy vision shall not be choked down to city walls. The Church shall not be shut up to inefficiency. Thy king

shall go forth to conquer. Thy horizon shall encircle the broad landscape."

The prophet's eye was adjusted to longer historical lines than he knew, and reached over the mountain tops to lands very far off. It rested on a more glorious personality than Hezekiah. This prophecy of the obstructions to Zion removed, and its real work and life begun, of the inspiring face to face vision of the King and His Land, of the Son of God, the King, and of the Church of God, the Land, should today enkindle our souls as it did the Hebrew seer of old.

"The King shall come in His beauty." The Church is not destined to austere and ascetic brotherhood. Her eyes are not glued down to the misery and sin of wars, Her feelings are not stirred by the passions of race hatreds, Her forces are not impotent to dare beyond the shadow of Her own battlements. Her heart is with Her glorious King who chose to lay aside the robes of His splendor, and work among us in the trenches of humiliation.

Strengthen your hands and your feeble knees, lift up your eyes to the glorious future, where your King shall be arrayed in His Conqueror's garments of beauty, where the length and breadth of His glorious realm and the completeness of His conquest shall be made evident, and where He shall present His Church to Himself without spot or blemish, faultless before the presence of His glory. There shall our sight be open to our Divine Saviour, shining with the sweetness of the Babe of Bethlehem, revealing the grace of a divine and heavenly nature, of which all outward and earthly loveliness is but the dim and vanishing shadow. There the Teacher on the Mount shall assume a glory greater than that of Solomon, and shall regenerate and reform that outward beauty, "which men so often corrupt and, in corrupting, at length destroy."

It is He who already has engilded our lives with the beams of His transfiguration on Tabor. It is He who has pledged, with the imparting of His own body and blood, the riches of His redemption; who already has drained the dregs of our curse and humiliation, putting Himself under the weight of our guilt on Calvary. It is He who already has assured our victory over war, and our rising from the tomb by His resurrection in the glorious garments of light, in the garden beyond the city walls. It is He, our King and Conqueror, who has already sanctioned the world-wide significance and predominance of our work, and continues to bless it by His presence among us. It is He who is interceding for us and reigning over us in glory everlasting; and promising to set in rectitude and on eternal foundations that which the damnable powers of darkness have destroyed, and to give unto every man far more, exceeding that which we can think or conceive.

Thus doth the Only Begotten of the Father, in His incarnation, and in His death and glorification, in His deeds and words, *open to our eyes* that Beauty which dazzles and delights the vision of angels; and reveal that supreme Love, which is the very essence of the blessed God forever.

The land was very far off to the Israelite of old, and even we,—who have had not merely the vision, but the historical knowledge of the Conqueror, and who have found Him to be the Way, the Truth and the Life, do not yet "behold Him as He is." The daughter of Zion has not so hungered and thirsted after righteousness, has not yet grown so pure in heart, that Her eye can clearly discern the Love and Truth revealed in Jesus Christ, and the glory that shall be shining in His Kingdom. But by faith we may even now rise from our *Contact with Crisis* to the height where we can survey the *Glories of Conquest.*

The Lutheran Church is not a dreamer. To Her, re-

ligion is not a mere poem of sweetness and light. She accepts and shoulders the realities. She holds to the doctrine of the King's Cross, and willingly takes Her cross. She follows the King of Sorrows into the conflict with the Prince of Darkness, and is ready to go down and labor in the bogs of corruption. She loves her Lord too well to desert Him in defeat or on the firing line. She stands foursquare on His orders. Her work looms up large before her. Was there ever a day when the Church must more prove her validity by her *service?* Or ever a day when Zion had a door so open to enter and redeem the world?

To homes broken up by the hundred thousand; to millions thrown out of the orbits of tradition; to multitudes regarding life as a romance of sight and song, and casting off restraint to revel in the lusts of the flesh; to multitudes more, looking on life as a cruel fate, that hath robbed them of loved ones and earthly savings and homes, and every hope; to men susceptible to good or evil in army and navy; to our youth going forth into lands where heaven is not the great reality, and the beauty of holiness is not earth's chief charm; to minds in which the principles of all things are turned upside down, and the practice of all things is whirling on new centers; the *Church of Jesus Christ must go,* for She is the only great stabilizer left, and Her work of redemption and regeneration, of salvation, uplift and sanctification, Her use of the living Word among the nations, Her quality, as the salt of the earth, Her vocation as the pillar of the truth, and Her commission as the bearer of life into chaos is almost overwhelming.

This General Council needs to be aroused to the seriousness of the work that now hangs over us. We need to rise above conventionality and pettiness, and to put the Kingdom of God on its feet in this new order. This is not the day for the pastoral song of the dreamer. We must

leave as our own boys must leave, the well ordered courts of the Temple. We must throw our strength into the march. We must be in the van and in the rearward of the moving host. And we must do this effectively, and therefore unitedly. We must not allow the world and its governments to exclaim at us, "Is Christ divided?" but must be able quickly to assume large responsibility. The hour has struck. The call has gone forth for the Church's mobilization.

"Like a mighty army
Moves the Church of God.
Brothers, we are treading
Where the saints have trod.
We are not divided,
All one body, we,
One in hope, in doctrine,
One in charity."

In all this our only strength lies in our King. We need the look and the inspiration of the Land that is afar off, and the light from the mountain tops. Our Church is not a night-blooming cereus, opening in short-lived tropical fragrance, and wilting away before the sunlight of reality. We do not put extreme pressure on our vitality to respond to the bloom of the moment. We realize that in God's plans there are other days beside today. We are not the men for a special "drive." Our work should be as steady as that of the shining sun, of the standing mountain or of the running river. Our work is a long distance and a life work. Mere movement as such, does not count with us. We are not hare-brained enthusiasts, driven hither and thither by every wind of doctrine. We are anchored to the Polar Star. We look above the battle to the Author and Finisher of our faith. We press forward, but we claim the right to interpret the importance of the moment by the measurements of the far distances. We do not go

into rhapsodies or into despondency, over the reported success or failure of our efforts. Whether the main lines of this convention now opening shall bring hope or dejection we know that we are in God's hands, and that our goal is the Land that is far off. In spite of every obstruction and barbed wire entanglement, we shall reach that Land, and Zion shall behold the King in His beauty.

V. What a magnificent picture also the prophet paints for us of *The Permanency of His Realm, the Church.* "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities. Thine eyes shall see a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any one of the cords thereof be broken."

We admit that we are only a moving tabernacle. In our present form, we are not the Church Triumphant. But we are crossing the waters of Jordan, and entering the secrets of this session, with the promise of God that we shall be safe. Our very life may be at stake. The tribes that *go up* to the Lord's house together, may point their weapons at each other, and not go down together. The city of our solemnities may for the moment be struck with tempest and whirlwind. But we shall not be torn asunder or disintegrated. "Thine eyes shall see a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, nor shall any of the cords thereof be broken."

Brethren, let us appreciate the greatness of God's promise, and the significance of this meeting of the General Council. We have arrived at a turning point. Let us interpret our Lutheran Church in America, one of God's tabernacles in this land, in the light of the city that is far off—with regard for underlying principles and ultimate

resultants. We are standing today at the point where the first Protestant stood in 1530,—not to present to a Diet, but to decide for ourselves, a great outward problem of the Church. We are going into this convention with our lives and our faith, and those of our congregations in our hands. We are standing where our Church stood in 1580, after she had been torn and wounded with a half century of internal conflict, that issued, on a basis then drawn up, in the final, and in some respects the greatest Confession of our Church, and that turned discord into concord. We are standing where our fathers stood in 1748, when, in this very congregation, the first general body of Lutherans, the Synod of Pennsylvania and of North America was organized. We are standing where the Church stood a century ago in 1817, to 1820, when Claus Harms sounded his great call on the walls of Zion across the waters, and when the General Synod of Lutherans in the United States was organized to become a tabernacle inclusive of all the tribes on this side. We are standing where our fathers stood in 1867, when this body which is today celebrating its Jubilee, first came into being. No convention in the last fifty years has had upon it responsibilities so great. Let us meet them with the vision of our Redeemer and our Conqueror before our eye. Let us be true to our convictions, whatever they may be. Let us be prepared to lay down our lives, but not our faith, in behalf of our beloved Zion, so that no one stake thereof may be removed. And let us be assured that, come what will, the Lord, our King, in His beauty, will not permit our destruction to be compassed. Our glorious Lord shall strengthen our weak hands. He will be our Conqueror. He shall say to them that are of a fearful heart, "Be strong, fear not. Your God will come and save you."

VI. And this picture of the security of the Church

militant dissolves, in our text, into the prophet's wonderful vista of the Church Triumphant. He points out to us *The Transformation and Glorification of the Returning and Victorious Children of His Kingdom.* "But there the glorious Lord will be unto us a place of broad rivers and streams." Zion shall enjoy fertility, as the Nile brings fertility to Egypt. Zion shall enjoy protection, as Babylon enjoyed the encompassing Euphrates, and as Venice is said to have "lived through its many centuries because girt about lagoons." "'Whereon shall no galleys go with oars. Neither shall a gallant ship pass by."

"They shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God." His glorified body, once the emblem of His degradation, shall now be robed in kingly garments. His wounds shall be His jewels; upon His head shall be many crowns; and His voice shall be as the noise of many waters. In the wilderness shall waters break out; and a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the way of holiness." The forces of nature shall be renovated and glorified. The burden of disease shall be lifted. The whole creation shall be filled with the joy and peace of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

And then we shall *come home.* The victorious army of the Lord shall return. The bride shall be arrayed for the Bridegroom. Our faith shall burst forth into realization, our love will be perfected in demonstration. The Church of God shall have entered Her Heavenly Zion and the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away. For Her crisis shall have been spanned, Her conquest shall be complete, and Her Conqueror, Who loved us and gave Himself for us, shall be all in all. Amen.

XVI

THE EYE THAT SEES AND THE LOVE THAT LOVES

Text—Luke 10:23-37.

My text, this morning has not been chosen, but given. It is the Gospel for last Sunday, and includes the Word of our Lord to His disciples; and, as the reply of our Lord to the great question asked him concerning eternal life, the parable of the Good Samaritan. In it our Lord speaks to us of the Blessed Eye; lays down before us the Great Commandment, and narrates to us the story of the Good Samaritan. Accordingly, we find from this Gospel that there are three things that upbuild and preserve God's Kingdom and God's people in the perfection of that stature that is in Christ Jesus. They are: VISION. DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE.

Vision gazes upon the truth as it is in Christ Jesus;—"Blessed are the eyes that see the things that ye see." Doctrine clings to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. "What is written? Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and thy neighbor as thyself. Thou hast answered right. This do and thou shalt live." Yet "the perfect law of God" without Christ becomes an instrument of condemnation. For what the law could not do, God sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, was able to accomplish, namely, that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us by faith. Therefore our keeping of the law is by faith, for through the redemption that is

in Christ Jesus, whom God has set forth as a propitiation through faith in His blood, we are justified freely by His grace. And these three, are one. Vision, or gazing at our heritage, our Lord and our goal, is naught else but hope. Doctrine, or clinging to our heritage and our Lord is naught else but faith. And the Christian Life, or realizing our heritage and practicing the Teachings of our Lord, is naught else but love. I ask you then to look with me at

1. The Church in Her Vision.
2. The Church in Her Doctrine or Teaching.
3. The Church in Her Life.

1. *Our Vision is not that of the things of earth.*

The Church sees not as the world sees. It is not a dream of the poets, or an uplifting ideal toward which the destinies of the human race are struggling. Our Vision is the things that the disciples saw. Our Vision is the sight of Christ, the apprehension of His Word, the appreciation of His work, and the looking for His coming, when "He shall present the Church unto Himself glorious and perfect, not having a spot or wrinkle or any such thing."

This Vision comes only by regeneration, by our being born again into the higher world, by the eye of faith opening to the reality of God. Vision is a being born of the Spirit—it is the life-touch implanted within, corresponding to the life of God Himself without. For the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. "Eye hath not seen nor ear heard the things God hath prepared for them that love Him, but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." The vision that comes by faith—not the knowledge that comes by sight,

or by analysis of the understanding, the vision that comes to the pure in heart—this is the Truth of life, this is the power of life, this is the fact incarnate in the Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Our age and many of our schools of the prophets however, have departed from Vision. Our young men and our old men, our students and professors, do not see visions; they see ashes and bones and potsherds. They have advanced beyond the Word of Christ, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God," to the word of Ex-President Eliot of Harvard, "Blessed are the keen in mind, for they shall find God, a natural product of the human soul." They are not apostles according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus, whose life is hid with Christ in God, and who look to the blessed appearing of our Lord. The things which they see are not the things of the Father, revealed by the Son, through the Holy Ghost. Their eye, and the goal of their vision, falls short of the glory of God.

Hence the vision of the prophets of old, faint and glimmering though it be, is nearer the things of God and His kingdom, than the barren results of a splendid scholarship of today. The critical spirit of the understanding is below the penetrative spirit of faith. The critic is interested in dissecting the truth of today, and not in gazing through it to the truth of yesterday and forever. "I am not intensively interested in what the apostles said. I am not actively interested in Biblical interpretation of any kind, but I am very much interested indeed in the industrial problem, the sex problem, the problems of municipal corruption, in immigration, and in economic and sociological investigation. I am interested in the growth of socialism. The better class of magazines replace the minister in the American home. The churches are moribund in their relation to social problems while the theaters are vividly alive

to them." These are the words of those whose Vision is not of the love of God and the glory of God. They lack the Vision of the Son of Man, and are far from the Father for no man knoweth who the Father is but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him. Our Vision comes *by the Word of God.* Our Vision looks unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. "We look not at the things that are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. Our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Brethren, we live by hope. When the entanglements, the imperfections and the failures of this world press in upon us, let the Vision of the Lord, of His love, of His kingdom, of His work, of His promises, and of the glorious consummation which is sure to follow, rise before our eyes, and let our hearts take courage once again. "Blessed are they that see the things which ye see and hear the things which ye hear."

2. *The Unchangeable Truth.*

In addition to the Blessed Eye, there is the Foundation Principle, the Unchangeable Truth, the Saving Word of Life, to which we ever cling.

We are profoundly thankful that men in old time spake as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance, that there is something written which is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. This Word of God, lies beneath all blessed Vision, and all safe action. We summarize it in the one word "Doctrine." It appears here in our text in its older and preparatory form, as Law rather than Gospel, as Commandment rather than Grace; as the law to life,

rather than the power of life. "What is written in the law? How readest thou?"

Doctrine does not come to Christ's people apart from personality and from life. The bare rugged law of the Old Testament which contains the grand prescription for perfection and the terrible penalty for failure to attain it, is not what Christ sets before us, except by way of a schoolmaster to lead us unto Himself. It is true that our Lord here seems to be repeating the law only, in all its grandeur, and in all its bareness. But we must remember the point of contact. He was starting in the pathway from the viewpoint of humanity and was leading upward to Himself, as the fulfillment of that which was lacking in the mind of the other. It was an Old Testament lawyer who asked the question of our Gospel and, consequently, it must be the Old Testament from which our Saviour draws His principle. The doctrine itself concerns the problem of all problems, that of eternal life. The answer is the answer of all answers, viz., that love is the fulfilling of the law. But the point withheld is the point of Christ, is the point of the Gospel, is the point that we are justified by faith and not by works of the law, is the point that the love of God with all our heart, comes solely from Christ; is the point that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy Ghost has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me by His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner as He has done these things for the whole Christian Church on earth.

Not only in Vision, but also in Doctrine, do we differ from the world. Of the new religion prophesied a few weeks ago by Ex-President Eliot before the Harvard Summer School of Theology, he said, "It will not be bound by *dogma or creed.* There will be no supernatural element.

It will place no reliance on anything but the laws of nature. It will be based on the two great commandments, the love of God and the service of fellowman. It will not be based on authority. There will be no deification of remarkable human beings. God will be so imminent that no intermediary will be needed. Its priests will strive to improve social and industrial conditions. The new religion will not attempt to reconcile people to present ills by the promise of future compensation." To this another has added, "It will not so much preach of salvation as it will attempt to help man's earthly condition here and now." In other words, while the new religion will lay all stress on Practice, it will lay none on Vision, and still less on Doctrine.

And surely it will be lacking in substance. It will have plenty of good material for exercise, but very poor food on which to feed. Without that inner spiritual upbuilding, without that life in the word of truth which distinguished Mary from Martha, and which our Saviour declared to be the better part and the one thing needful, the new religion will be lacking in depth and power. After all, the deep things of life go back to God. They are not the negro problem, the municipal problem, or the social problem. And after all our apprehension of God as a reality, apart from speculation, is in the person of Jesus Christ, and our relation to Christ, a relation which He has offered and which we accept, and which is apart from the deed we do, is the one reality in religion. Our personal relation to Christ, and not any problem, is the heart of religion, and the hope of all our real social upbuilding.

The first great commandment is not "Love," but it is "Love for God." To realize this commandment, God sent His Only Begotten Son to give His life for the world. The opposition to Doctrine and Creed is due to a vital lack of

faith in that fact. A religion composed of deeds, absorbing itself in this world here and now, with no vitality other than that to be found in the social problems of the day, is a tree full of blossoms, but lacking in root. The source of spiritual strength is never in that which we see. All true power in religion arises out of the unseen, and to cut one's religious life off from the unseen, from the truth to which we cling by faith, from Doctrine, from the principle of redemption as revealed in God's Word, is to sever ourselves from the one and only source and fountain of everlasting life.

The Church is not a civic community. It is not a social body, existing solely for the temporal welfare of society. The Church is the organism of Christ in the world, to redeem man from the incompleteness and blackness of himself, and to fill him with a fountain of life that will serve him when industrial problems, sex problems, municipal corruption problems, and other problems are no more. In short, the object of the Church is to render our heart and soul complete in God, to put us into the relation in which we belong to Him, but from which we have fallen away. And it is not so much that the Church is moribund to social problems, as that those who think it is so, are moribund to the life of God, the love of God, the objects of God, the kingdom of God, and the redemption of God provided in Jesus Christ.

Here then we see the difference between the old religion of God's Word, and the new religion advocated by Ex-President Eliot. The key to his utterance is to be found in the sentence, "There will be no supernatural element." This means to say that our life is sealed and shut down to this natural life on earth. God has not spoken to man in any supernatural way in the Bible. He has not sent any warnings to man to call him away from wickedness but such as

come to him *in the regular course of nature.* He does not protect and preserve him by direct acts of Providence. He has not so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. He has not given us the victory over death and the grave, and we have no absolute assurance of a life everlasting. He has not opened the door of heaven to all believers. We are surrounded on all sides by the God we see, the God of nature, the God Who is imminent in everything, and He has not founded any Church for the life that is everlasting. The new religion, according to its foremost spokesman will seek to hide sorrow and death from the world, and to conceal from man the fangs of his bitterest foe, that he may live in the delusion, that the life here and now is full of nothing but joy, and that when it comes to an end, it will be to the end to which it was ever destined by nature.

The new religion will not teach that those who suffer affliction in this present life and bear it patiently as the people of God will be rewarded therefore on the day of judgment; or that injustice administered here and now will also meet its reward on the day of judgment. The new religion will not teach us to look to a future leveling up of the crudeness of this earthly life, but will ask its ministers to get to work to improve social conditions right here as they are the only ones of which we know, and the ones in which we live and move and have our being. The new religion, according to President Eliot will not be based upon authority, which means that man's own will and his own development are to be the supreme nature and law of life; and that God's Name is not the primary thing to be hallowed, and His Kingdom is not the primary thing to come, and His Will is not the primary thing to be done on earth.

This is the popular religion of today. It gets rid of the most unpleasant elements in the old Gospel, and places man's chief activities of thought and heart where he chiefly likes them to be, that is, on earth and in the things of the world. It preserves such men as ex-President Eliot, respectable men, men of great excellence of character, from humbling themselves before God side by side with the Publican. It causes the camp down amid the tents of Rephidim to be of more import than the communion upon the height of Sinai. Above all, it gets rid of the terrible consciousness of sin in the soul. Nothing is so unwelcome to an earnest man of culture and good motive as to be told constantly by the Church that he is a sinner. Good men do not like to believe that they have a worse side to themselves. The Greeks, who have bequeathed us the most perfect words of culture and wisdom that the world has known, could not endure the emphasis of Christ's Gospel upon sin, nor were they sufficiently profound in soul to perceive the logic of it, therefore the preaching of the cross was to them foolishness. Now I believe it to be true that the old doctrine of sin is the vital center of any religion. The paradox is remarkable, that the better a man is, in the true sense, the worse he feels himself to be. It is in my best moments, and not in my worst that I most keenly realize my shortcomings. And the better a Christian I become, the more I feel myself to be unworthy and to have fallen short of the glory of God. Never was anything said more truly than the utterance of a recent writer who defines a Pharisee as "A man who is satisfied with himself." The keynote of all true religion is the mystery of the Cross, and the cause of the mystery of the Cross is every man's transgression.

While the old doctrine of Christ as realized in the churches and in the lives of Christians reveals weakness and exaggerations, and in so far is open to criticism, the

new and popular religion of today, the religion that men like to dream, as having no supernatural element in it, as making much of the kingdom of earth and little of the kingdom of heaven, as regarding eternity as a faith not to be looked forward to too expectantly, and Christ, as the incarnation of goodness and not the Redeemer from wickedness, is a religion that will neither save nor satisfy, for it will not give us either the plan or the power to become complete and perfect in God. It is only in Christ that we are complete in God. Christ Himself, as the interpreter and fulfiller of the perfect law of God, is the one and only answer to the problem of eternal life propounded by the lawyer.

Christ answered the lawyer formally by pointing out the impossible requirement by referring to the written Scripture of the Old Testament, and by approving of the summing up of the whole law as perfect love to God and man. Christ answered the lawyer substantially by giving His life on the Cross for the life of the world, thus wiping away the weakness of the law and realizing the love of God to man, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have everlasting life. The Church in Her Doctrine, and in Her Confession of it, holds forever unto Christ.

Doctrine then, in its two parts, first, the Law, which is *the requirement* of perfect love, and second, the Gospel, which is *the fulfilling* of the requirement, the sense of Sin which the truth of God awakens in use, the trust of faith which the love of God awakens in us, this is *the true Religion, the real Doctrine* of God.

3. We have found in our text, first, the Blessed Eye, the Church in her Vision; second, the Unchangeable Truth, the Church in her Doctrine; and now we come, in the third and last place to the actual Practice of the truth in love, to the Church in Her life.

The application by the Church of eternal life to this life is set forth by our Saviour at considerable length in the wonderful and well-known parable of the Good Samaritan. In this parable our Saviour brought both Vision and Doctrine *down to Practice.* When the lawyer asked for definition, Christ replied by describing action.

It is really true that the Vision of Eternal Life is not to possess our soul so exclusively, and the definition of Doctrine is not to absorb our time so completely that there remains no strength for the duties of the life our Lord expects us to live, and the work which He has placed us here to do. The teaching of the Confessions of our Church is very strong on this point and especially so in this age when there is so much emphasis laid on a Practice which is neither rooted in Divine Doctrine, nor inspired by Divine Vision, but which is a mere human doing. It is more important than ever for our Church not to stop at the point of faith, but to show that faith brings forth the perfect fruit of the Spirit in the relations of life in which God has set us.

This parable of the Good Samaritan is a perfect exemplification of our life of faith in that on the one hand it avoids that weak and sentimental religion which awakens feelings of love in our hearts but which also wastes the feelings thus awakened in mere utterances and in resolutions. On the other hand it also avoids that impersonal, business-like way of helping men, which evaporates the very essence of love and mercy, which deals with men as things and not as sons, and which saves our souls the pain of personal effort and sympathy.

In picturing the life of the Christian and the Church, our Lord has set before us the parable of a journey. Jesus Himself was constantly journeying from spot to spot; and travel has broadened so greatly in our own day, that the

figure of the Church's work as she proceeds on the way to heaven, is significant. Amid competitors, little dreaming what is before us in the roadway, our Church moves on, and of necessity takes upon herself the habit and attitude of a traveler. Who deals with mankind in such a hard-hearted, selfish, thoughtless, callous, irresponsible manner as the average traveler? Who passes by the sore spots of life and passes through the lowlands of suffering with greater irritability and indifference than the traveler who is hurrying onward to his own particular goal? Who has less time for the common service that ministers, and that glorifies the minister in the act, than the priest and the Levite hurrying on their way to fulfill an ecclesiastical appointment, which constitutes a large part of the work of their life? When we come to analyze the Practice of love, as it is depicted in the parable of the Good Samaritan by our Lord for the life of the Church, we find that it affords us at least four valuable hints.

1. And the first of these is that the Church in Her practice and life should not permit Racial Prejudices to operate in the heart and hinder the work to which She is set. The two men set before us were, the one a Jew and the other a Samaritan; and it was the man of despised blood and lineage whom the Saviour commended, whereas the man of chosen blood and lineage failed on the very point in which he should have been foremost.

What lesson could be more appropriate to such a Council as this than that which our Saviour has drawn for us in the picture of the Jew and the Samaritan with the unhallowed antipathy in the heart of the man of the race which God has honored most. This General Council of the Lutheran Church in North America is set for the purpose of bringing together and overcoming that natural hostility

and antipathy that will be tempted to arise in the hearts of the best of us as Christians, because we love our own race, our own blood, our own tongue, and our own institutions. Such love is right and proper, and I would give very little for that cultured and careless cosmopolitanism which forgets the pit from which its ancestors were digged. Loyalty to our own, to that which is dear to us, is a great and a noble principle. But it must also be held in conjunction with loyalty and love toward those whom we do not so fully love by nature. Thanks be to God that there is an illustration of Lutheranism here in America, found nowhere else on the face of the earth, which is attempting without asking the question defensively, "And who is my neighbor?" under all the difficulties that it encounters because of the weakness of human nature and of historical diversities lodged in its past, to realize the parable of the Good Samaritan. Thanks be to God for the General Council and the spirit of the General Council. May She be able to show the world that the parable of the Good Samaritan is not a mere dream among the hard facts of selfish human life, but that it is the Church Herself in Her fullest and finest fruitage.

2. Second, the teaching of this parable to the Church in her practice is not only that Racial Prejudice should not operate, but that Religious Prejudice should not prevent us from executing the full measure of mercy toward each other. It was not merely an aversion of race but far more of religion, that contrasted the Priest and the Levite and the Samaritan.

There is a natural reason why Religious Prejudices should be strong, and I firmly believe that God frequently makes use of such prejudices, which operate as closed barriers against the introduction not only of much that is use-

ful but of much that is demoralizing, to save His Church in times of peril. It was this closed attitude toward other nations that kept the people of God intact through many most trying periods in Old Testament days; and there is a certain close traditional attitude of men today which is useful in carrying numbers through the speculative weaknesses of the age, and which even preserves the children of God from demoralization in spite of the swarms of errors with which they are surrounded. But all this is an unconscious and a higher operation of a general law on our behalf; and does not justify us in declaring the principle of the Good Samaritan, or in acting on the principle of the Priest or of the Levite. Much of the narrowness of the Church in its failure to touch the world in its real life, is a certain Pharisaic prejudice which sees the mote in its neighbor's eye, and fails to see the beam in its own eye; and is painted by our Saviour in this parable of the Good Samaritan, when he pictures the Priest and the Levite who by chance came down that way and who looked at their suffering fellowman and passed by on the other side.

3. The third point of application that I would make to the practice of the Church in her work from this parable of the Good Samaritan is that our prejudices of judgment as to the danger and discomfort to be found in any particular path should not operate against our pursuing it. There are some who always would keep the Church back from pouring oil and wine and from setting a good cause on Her own beast and bringing it forward through the critical portions of its journey.

Our Saviour, in this parable, passes all objection to the Samaritan doctrine by without a word, and comes down to the substance of actual love. The Samaritan was bold, because he loved. The Samaritan put such resources as he

had at hand into immediate operation, and to his own inconvenience, because he loved.

On this lofty plane of action, wonders can be done by the Church. All things are possible to him that loveth.

4. The fourth and last lesson of the parable of the Good Samaritan which I shall draw for the help of the Church in her great work on earth is this, that an outlook of financial narrowness should not operate to hinder projects that otherwise commend themselves as necessary and wise. It is indeed well to count the cost before we begin to build; but where the palace to be erected is not one for our own habitation or convenience, and where the act is a response of mercy inspired by God to the call of need, there the financial situation should not operate as a deterrent. Had the Samaritan been filled with fears at the start as to what should become of the poor and wounded charge on his hands after he had rescued him, or had he regarded the preservation of his purse from spoliation as the main object for him to see to, he might have been deterred from doing what he did. But he took one step at a time. He responded simply and naturally to the compassion which the mute appeal of mercy aroused in him. He used his oil and wine gladly. He got the Jew away from the spot of danger the best he could, and step by step he took care of him, till he could bring him to an inn. By that time, his heart was enlarged. He gave what he had in the present, and he said to the host of the inn, "Whatsoever thou spendest more, when I come again I will repay thee."

What a man, what a Christian, was this Good Samaritan! If our causes could be brought to the Church, in all their helplessness by men such as these, who would not hesitate, in their faith in God and in the largeness of their heart, to say, "Take care of him: whatsoever thou spendest

more, when I come again, I will repay thee''? How would not the wilderness bloom as the rose; how would not in our mission fields, the parched grounds become pools, the thirsty land springs of water, the wide fields blossom abundantly and rejoice; how would not the whole land see the glory of the Lord to the excellency of God!

Dear brethren, once again let us renew our strength by the hope *of old,* by the faith *of old,* and by the charity that *never faileth.*

The love of our Lord, the life and death of our Lord given to use in the Sacrament, will strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees, so that the lame shall leap as a hart and the tongue of the dumb shall sing, so that the holy city shall awake and put on her beautiful garments, and that, when, in a week from now, our work is done, the waste places of Jerusalem may break forth into joy and the heart of Zion may know that the Lord has comforted His people, and that they who stand upon the mountains may bring tidings of good, and may say unto all the daughters of Zion, ''Thy God reigneth!'' Amen.

XVII

WHAT HAVE WE TO DO WITH THEE?

> "And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with Thee, Jesus, Thou Son of God? Art Thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Matthew 8:29.

Our Gospel speaks of the healing of a man who was defective in speech and hearing; our text of a man who was deficient and unbalanced in mind. You remember the story—our Lord came to the other side of the Sea of Galilee and went into the country of the Gadarenes. As He stepped out of the ship there met Him a man who had been living among the graves, and was possessed of unclean spirits. The spirits had such control over him that no one could subdue or hold him, not even with chains. Nor could any man tame him. He lived in the desolate mountains night and day, making strange sounds, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus arrive, he came up out of the distance and cried, "What have we to do with Thee, Thou Son of the most high God? Art thou come here to torment us before the time?" Jesus asked who he was. He said, "My name is Legion," because he was filled with many spirits. These asked Jesus, when they perceived He was going to cast them out, that they might enter a herd of swine feeding nearby. He gave them permission, and they entered into the swine. Wherefore two thousand of them ran violently down a steep place into the sea and were drowned. The swine herders ran into the city, and told what had happened to those who lived there. Almost immediately a deputation of them came to Jesus and found the wild

man sitting at His feet clothed, and in his right mind. Upon hearing again how the evil spirits had left him and had entered into the swine and had destroyed them, they begged Jesus to depart out of their coasts. Our Lord had saved a man, but he had also destroyed their property; and so they objected. They would rather have had the man sit in ruins and go howling and demented through the tombs, than suffer the loss of a herd of swine. It was money that counted with them. Our Lord was also a stranger. He had come across the Sea of Galilee. He was outside of His own territory. They thought He had no right, as men regarded rights, to meddle with affairs on their side.

And this was true. Our Lord never meddled with political institutions or civil regulations or trespassed on other people's rights, even in His own country. And it was only on the rarest occasions that He was willing to heal any sick outside of the limits of His own land. "I am not sent," He said, "but to the lost sheep of the House of Israel." But here, as He stepped ashore through no efforts of his, there had approached Him this poor life-wr-ecked demoniac. In such a case He felt that His power to help had no bounds. His authority over men's minds and souls was universal. And always, no matter with whom He came into contact, whether it was the Galileans, or the Pharisees of Jerusalem, or the soldiers of Rome, or the Samaritan woman, or Pontius Pilate, He tried to rebuke and drive out the evil, and assumed the right to cleanse the heart and mind.

This is true even today. The demoniac represents the authority of the wrong, of evil, over human nature. The Saviour represents the authority of the right, of the good, over human nature. The wrong disputes the authority of the right. "What have I to do with Thee?" it says. But the right, because it is the right, because it comes from God, and because it saves man, is superior to the wrong.

Every one of us that is strong in the liberty of the truth, owes it to his neighbor and to society to use his strength for Jesus' work. If any one of us is superior to others in his spiritual insight and his moral nature, he has authority to cast out the wrong in others to the extent in which he is superior. He has the right of rebuking; the right of cleansing; the right of propagating spiritual power wherever he goes. Christians are called to this: "Let your light so shine that men may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven."

It is true that there are some men in the community who claim such right to attack wrong, to cast out demons, and to purify the community, who are not really animated by the love and holiness of God; but who are carried away by their own narrow feelings and prejudices. These men set themselves on the side of the right, and profess to be leaders there and yet they substitute their own impatient and narrow will for the will of God. The average reformer is sometimes such a man. He beats the drum and cries out against the mote in his brother's eye, and sees not the beam in his own. He may be on the right side and yet be so lacking in patience and in love, and in all the attributes of wisdom and justice, that he will use the wrong method. He may be so aggressive, that instead of waiting until he has a genuine call to assert authority over evil, and bid it depart, he goes out on his own initiative and becomes a professional tomb-searcher and bush-beater to find it. He is a natural born fighter, and takes more pleasure in the fight than in the result. Perhaps it even does not so much matter on what side, or under whose banner he is lined up, only so that he can swing his sword. And he becomes so blinded with zeal, that instead of awaiting his opportunity, and getting accurate aim, he slashes crudely at the wrong, and like the Apostle Peter, cuts off its right ear.

The man who undertakes to fight the wrong in the name of the Lord, must have a call from the Lord. He must be sure it does not come from his pride, from his wrath, from his likes or dislikes, but that he has been really commissioned for the work. He must possess peculiar qualifications. Many men have gone to the recruiting stations of the nation and, although they had excellent fighting qualities, some single defect, perhaps not very conspicuous to the average eye caused the United States, in its experience, to reject them. So there are many self-called reformers, who put themselves at the head of the ranks, and who go forth to cast out demoniacs but who have perhaps a single deficiency that renders them useless in the conflict of the Kingdom of God with the kingdom of evil, and that should teach them to take a back seat.

In the army, if a man is flat-footed, or has a broken arch, or if his eye sees crooked only to a very small extent, or if his hearing be ever so slightly defective, no matter how brave or valiant he is, he is not called to this particular work, but is sent back to his more peaceful but equally useful occupation of farming, laboring, or manufacturing. Similiarly, a man of strong passions, high temper, bitter feelings or with the desire to take revenge, is not fitted to become a spiritual reformer. The same is the case with the man who is lacking in judgment, who explodes too soon, who has vulnerable spots in his past career, or who is deficient in motive or in method.

These are the men that become fanatics and induce hysteria in a community, and though they sweep things empty with an exceedingly powerful broom, the last state is worse than the first. They are very different in disposition from the quiet, imperturbable, self-sacrificing, sympathetic, patient and long-suffering Lord.

When God actually gives a man a call to this work,

when Providence has placed the evil directly before him in his pathway, (as this demoniac was placed in the pathway of the Lord Jesus,) then it is his place to act. Then he is clothed with the authority of the right over the wrong. Then he has been ordained and permitted of God to use His spiritual power, His judgment, and His moral strength in vanquishing the wrong; and it is his duty to drive out the demon and save the man.

What did our Lord see here standing and kneeling before Him? The most pitiful thing that human eye can look upon—a man in ruins. There is nothing sadder, and, sad to say, nothing more common, than a life in ruins. We cannot look upon the burning of our neighbor's house or the kidnapping of our neighbor's son or daughter without sympathy. We cannot read that a fleet of vessels has foundered in a great storm at sea without a certain sadness. We cannot behold a city going to ruin, its buildings dilapidated and filled with memorials of former glory, its inhabitants with their powers and faculties shattered, without feeling a desire to do our part in the work of rescue if that be possible. And when our Lord beheld this man in ruins, this immortal soul shattered and dilapidated, the sight seemed to clothe Him with more than usual power and zeal. In this case the evil spirit had eaten deeply into the man's nature. Not only were the man's faculties darkened, but the devils had perpetually turned him against himself. The dark spirits had employed their power to set his nature against his own bodily life, and to drive him hither and thither. They not only restrained his freedom of the spirit, but they turned all the forces of his being to torment. Night and day he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones. A pitiable spectacle he was.

The moment our Saviour came into his presence, a con-

flict was inevitable. The evil prepared to fight. On the Saviour's side was the supernal. On the ruined man's side was the infernal. On the Saviour's side was the divine. On the ruined man's side was the demoniac. The evil spirits scented the Lord's purity and power from afar. Their fears immediately prophesied their fate. They set up a howling resistance at His first appearance. They cried, "What have we to do with Thee?" What hast Thou to do with us? We are in possession here. This man's body is our home. You have no rights here. You are a stranger in this country. You go away. You let us alone. "Art Thou come hither to torment us before our time?" What they meant was this,—We admit Thou art the Lord of all. We admit that right has authority over wrong. But we claim you have no right to touch us here and now. It is not your business. The other life is appointed for punishment. Here *we* have rights. This is *our* time. Freedom belongs to us here, and we should be permitted to continue therein. If it were the other life, if it were the world in which we are to be finally punished, then we should bow before you. But this is our day. Do not meddle with us now. Let us alone. Thus Satan argued. Though he was degrading and destroying the most sacred and glorious creation of God, namely, a human life; he claimed not only the right to do it, but that it was divine impertinence in Christ to intrude and meddle.

This is the stand that the wrong always takes when it is brought to bay. With this kind of reasoning the wrong in our own modern life tries to block every attempt to drive it out from the possession of the men it is turning into ruin. This is the next text which evil always preaches against reform. It says, "Let me alone. You are going out of your sphere. Take care of your own affairs, and I will take care of mine." All efforts to cleanse impurity by

purity are met by this plea. All the bad and corrupting forces in society say, "We have our rights. You must not meddle. This is our period and our place. Go away. Mind your own business." Whether it is the United States trying to stop the moral pollution of its children in sights and scenes upon its streets, or in its play houses, to suppress looseness and gambling at its county fairs, to root out the corruption of the police and their connivance and coöperation with evil, or to prevent the degradation of young and old by the spreading of opium and other terrible drugs, the effort is always met, (just as our Saviour's effort was,) by the cry "What have you to do with us. Get away. Tend to your own affairs." The appetites and passions dominate and demonize the soul. They ruin not only men, but society. They pervert the natural faculties. They bring on disease and a blighted mind;—yet when rightful authority tries to drive them out, they inspire resistance.

Hundreds and thousands of men are possessed of the demons of avarice, of lust, of intemperance, of brutal cruelties, of tyranny. We Christians see it right before our eyes. And yet we are scarcely moved. We are accustomed to it. It has always been so. It was so in our father's day. Therefore we are not affected any more than the Gadarenes, when they looked at the poor outcast demoniac wandering among the tombs. They had seen him so often that he no longer excited their compassion. Do not believe that the devil is dead. His spirits are as active today as ever. You can see that on every street, in every paper, in every great gathering. The devil's spirits try to enter our sons and daughters, and induce them to gluttony and lust and vagrancy. Their number is great and they often come to power and influence. Some of them live in palaces. Some of them are at the head of capital. They dispute with us for the possession of our children and our country.

Who shall control the conduct of society? The men whose instincts are brutal, or the men who are noble and spiritual? Who shall make the laws? Who shall execute the laws? Who shall sit upon the bench? Shall the lowest elements rule the higher, or shall the higher keep down the destructive power in the lower? All that the lower wants is liberty,—the liberty to ruin and destroy.

There are many organized agencies which represent brutal sports, criminal excitements, frivolous and demoralizing pleasures, who in secret live the life of the brute. These evil forces of society often constitute a clan. They huddle together. They assume that they have rights which no one has a call to cut off. Whatever may happen to them on the day of judgment, we must not touch them now. They say, "We do not interfere with you in your goodness and your piety. You have respectable spots in your city. Keep them. But vice also has its rights. We must have a home likewise and we have a right to flourish there. You need not come into our territory, and we will not come into yours. Give us our tenderloin and we will let you have your churches. Follow your own idea of being free and happy, and let us follow ours. We do not want your way. You do not want ours. This is a free country. Let us alone."

This is usually the attitude of the criminal classes who make money by catering to destructive appetites, who for the sake of gain to themselves, are willing to destroy men, by exciting them to evil passions. These men are often higher up. They have been called the architects of damnation. Try to touch them and disturb them and they tell you, you are invading their prescriptive rights. You are busy-bodies in other men's affairs. You are stepping outside of your sphere. You have no right to awaken the consciences of those whom we are destroying.

The Saviour would never listen to such argument of the

demons. But when that argument was re-enforced by the pleas of respectable men, He more than once shook the dust of that neighborhood from the soles of His feet, and left the city to its fate. He did so in the case of the Gadarenes.

If Lot had done so centuries earlier in the case of the city of Sodom, he would not have been obliged to flee from it in the dead of night, with his family well-nigh ruined, and the city roaring in flames.

Our Lord claims that the good is superior to the evil, because man has been created for the good, and not for the evil; and because God is superior to Satan. He knew that it is the duty of men and governments and especially of Christians, to work in accordance with the highest ideals, and not with the lowest. He knew that human nature needs to be cleansed. He knew that the earth belongs to the meek, and not to those debauched with animal passion. He knew that virtue has authority over vice, order over disorder, and life over death. Our Saviour also knew how slow good men are to touch the bad, especially when it is organized; and how we all attempt to put our own personal interests and duties forward so far, that there is no time or strength left for us to aid in the extermination of evil. On this account He told the story of the Good Samaritan: The man on a journey. There had been two travelers before him. The first was a servant of the Church. He saw his fellow-traveler struck down by the robbers, but he went on. It was not his business to meddle. Then came the Levite who also saw, but had no time, and passed by on the other side. Then came the despised Samaritan who proved to be the only true man in the whole party and went up and relieved the sufferer. And so today the name Good Samaritan stands for that part of the community which is willing to help in the rescue of the suffering and the downfallen,

and we have Good Samaritan Hospitals, Good Samaritan Retreats, and Good Samaritan Homes.

The question is however, how do you and I respond when the call comes to us to take hold of evil, and when the evil calls out, "Let us alone". Are we trying to keep our children from the corruption that lures them in most attractive form, from contaminating influence, from pitfalls, and from the brazen evils that stalk abroad and land myriads in demons' tombs, from the brutes of monsters that live by corrupting and devouring youth? Are we trying to keep them from loss of reputation, from undermining of health, from damnation after death? Are we aiding to create a healthy public opinion against the forces that drag men down, or are we permitting beasthood to assume the place of power in our nation? Do we wish to multiply the miserable creatures that wander day and night in our public parks, and in our thoroughfares and back alleys, who have not a vestige of holiness, nor a spark of true affection, nor any sense of duty or respectability, but who have become depraved and abandoned?

If so, we must say to the wrong, "Come out of him." We must protest against the evils which men indulge in from abundance of money. We must stand against the carnival of corruption. We must tell the owners of swine that the souls of people are worth more than the price of swine. We have the right and we must voice it. But if we forever exercise this negative right, we are doing very little. We are driving out the bad, and leaving the soul empty. We must plant within that soul the Word of God and the power of the Holy Spirit. We must implant the love of God and the affections of the Spirit, so that the slaves of the evil become free sons of God.

We must make manifest more gloriously the power of God in the human soul. We must so shine in every affec-

tion that the good will be seen. We must distribute the comfort of God and the strength of God in our combat with grief, with temptation, and with wickedness in high places. We must inspire hopeless and degenerate hearts to press forward to the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. We must put them into contact with the blessed Saviour, Who came to seek and to save the most wretched; and to give mercy to the uttermost, so that none shall be consumed. We must cause them to know the unsearchable riches of the Gospel of Christ. We must employ this gospel of mercy, of truth, of liberty, of humanity, of a true Christian brotherhood saved by the blood of Jesus, in a common hope and a common aspiration, for excellence and glory in the life that is to come. Yes, and we must call upon the Lord, the blessed Son of God and Giver of life, the only Conqueror of Satan, continually to destroy Satan and all his works, to compass with a chain those who lift up their faces against God and the good, to strike off the chains from the enslaved, and to purify them and us to every good work. **Amen.**

XVIII

HIDDEN WITH CHRIST

"And your life is hid with Christ in God." Colossians 3:3.

Your life is your greatest treasure. From it you draw success or failure, tranquillity or turbulence, happiness or unhappiness. What then will you do with your life? Will you waste it; will you use it; or will you hide it?

1. There is a tremendous amount of wasted life in the world. Much of it is entirely beyond our control. The ten lepers spoken of in this morning's Gospel are a type of life that has been wasted by circumstances over which its possessor had no control. Infantile paralysis has rendered thousands helpless and impaired their futures. The war with its dreadful instruments of slaughter has spilled the blood of millions on the sod of Europe and has blighted the comfort and happiness of millions more. These are sad facts over which alas we had no control.

There is however, a sadder and more deliberate waste, which is fully within our control and that is the waste of sin. Men deliberately make up their minds to waste their lives "for the fun of it." The prodigal set out with the express purpose of getting all the pleasurable experiences he could out of the expenditure of his share of his father's substance. The daily papers indicate an astonishing number of people who go to Atlantic City, New York, and elsewhere to waste their characters and futures in riotous liv-

ing. You see gay young men or young women wasters in every city and in every strata of society. The old story of Bethsaida, Chorazin, Sodom, Gomorrah and Babylon will be repeated unless men soon see and heed the handwriting on the wall.

There are good people however,—that is, very respectable and careful persons who would not waste money and who are judicious in their conduct but who nevertheless are making a failure of their lives. Of these many are like the rich young ruler. They are selfish and sordid. They are unwilling to do anything for anyone but themselves. They want to attain the highest good in life but they are unwilling to invest all in the service of the Master. How many such people there are in this very town! They have no public spirit; they feel no needs but their own; they will not be numbered among those who follow Jesus. Intent on material blessings they forego those that are spiritual. Concerned with temporal advantages they squander those which are eternal.

Others of this class of people are to be found among the ranks of those who are dissatisfied and disappointed, who are unable to accept their lot.

They find they are married to the wrong person. They discover they have learned the wrong trade. They think they live in the wrong town. They know quite clearly what they want and it is a good thing, not a bad thing, that they desire. And so they lose courage and hope and sometimes even faith. Their desire grows and grows within them. It becomes more and more intense. They brood over it and in their failure to attain it the bright sun shines over them no more, and life loses its charm. They have no bad habits, they are willing and wish to sacrifice and do good, in the way they have set before them, but there is no opportunity.

You cannot tell these people, as you can the gay people, merely by looking at them. Their outward life cannot be distinguished from that of others. The difference is in that which does not appear. It is in that which lies behind conduct. It is in the hidden life. It is in that which inspires, guides, restrains or deadens the heart.

If you could look in and see what the powers are that are turning the machinery of the soul, you would find the difference very quickly. Here are two men making money. They are both moral and respectable. But one is acting from greed and the other from love. Here is a man who is true to his relation but its charm is gone. He knows that the great motive is no longer there. He knows that there are things in his heart that he dare not awaken. There are thoughts that he must turn from and banish. If he reads a book, he closes it quickly, his hand falters, his eye grows moist, "oh, what might have been." But he shuts out the thought. It is not safe. He goes on in the usual way. Early and late he is faithful. Here is a mother. She was a sweet and fragrant flower, growing in the side of a great hill. All her days were beauteous. They ran like a rill down the hillside, and sang all the time. But look, the song has gone out of her spirit. Her children are well-reared. Her husband is well clad and cared for. Her home is neat. But her gift bestowed has not met appreciation. Her husband is interested in other affairs. Her children are thin in soul and frivolous. A nameless pain grips her heart. She is bitterly disappointed and yet she is true. Here is a man who was promised a promotion. He worked faithfully for it. He toiled in season and out of season. And now it is given to another. The iron has entered his heart!

These persons are not to be turned down rudely. They are to be sympathized with. There is One who loves them

and who has said to them: "Come unto Me and I will give you rest. Come ye disconsolate and ye shall find relief for your hearts."

2. And if they will but come the Lord Jesus will teach them no longer to waste, but to use their lives and to find happiness in so doing. He calls, "Follow Me,—and if you will really give yourself up to me, I will make of you a happy creature." Follow Him and you will lose yourself and find a new and better self in Him and in His work. Have you ever tried to get out of yourself, your own desires, your own deepest longings and *be a blessing?*

You cannot be a true blessing in this world except at a cost to yourself. Even a grain of wheat must give up the light, and go into the ground to yield a harvest. So it will cost your heart's blood to be a blessing. But in giving up the happiness you have set your heart on and been longing for—in losing this—you will gain a greater happiness.

Have you ever tried to carry the peace and love of Jesus with you, tried to feel what others want and to get it for them, kind words, encouraging looks, soothing an invalid's pillow, taking a little orphan to live with you and bringing him up, comforting a sobbing child on the street, humoring a father who returns home weary from the cares of work?

We get no blessing that has not cost us a prayer or a tear. The life that is beneficent cannot be one of selfish enjoyment. He that loveth his life, shall lose it. You can have your choice. You can hide your life in your own wishes; perhaps you will gain them; perhaps you will not; but either way there will be no harvest from it. You have stayed within yourself, within your own plans and desires, and have been a blessing to none.

There is another way to live—not to think of or to care

for your own desires, but to hide your life in God. They tried to hold Jesus back from the Cross. They said His life was too precious to be wasted. He was as a mother to this world. He loved to take the little children in His arms and feel the tender clasp of their tiny fingers about Him. But He put them aside and did His duty. He bore the cross and was lifted up upon it. And what a harvest He gained in happiness for Himself and in happiness for others!

God knows what is best for us. Many a mother has worn out her life in bringing up her children, and they have never thanked her for it. Still she has done her duty and God will reward her. Many a lonely woman would have been glad to be a mother to all those children, and spend and be spent for them—she has had the maternal instinct and never had the little ones on whom to exercise it. But if she will seek the work and be the blessing that God has made possible for her, she will gain a happiness that never would have come through mere selfish love of her own. There's lots to do in the world. Cheer up, discouraged one and make up your mind to be a blessing.

A piece of ebony wood once bitterly complained that it was not planted in the ground, that it might yield seed, and have other young trees growing round it. The man who held the wood in his hand, did not listen to its sore complaining, but kept cutting into it remorselessly and filling it with rifts and holes. He was cutting a wonderful flute out of it. Finally he said, "Oh, thou foolish piece of wood, without these rifts thou wouldst be only a mere stick or a wild tree forever. These cuts I am giving thee, which seem to be destroying thee, will transform thee into a musical instrument, and the sweet music of thy soul shall charm and inspire the hearts of men." How many of us would rather remain a selfish knotty stick, than have our

desires cut out of us, in order to become a beautiful flute, a thing of joy to the Lord and to the world forever.

If all the time you expended in vain regrets were devoted to intelligent constructive efforts, you would not be in struggle or despair, or doubt your powers of usefulness. Come: search for flowers, and you will forget the briars. Listen for the nightingale, and you will overlook the hooting of the owl. Look up at the stars and the black caves about you will no longer frighten you. "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not unto thine own understanding." Hope thou in God and your nerves will not receive shocks, nor your mind collapse. You are resting in the hollow of His hand, and know that underneath are the everlasting arms.

3. And this brings me to the last part of my sermon. Instead of wasting our life we are to use it, and hide it. "Your life is hid with Christ in God."

Everyone has two lives, the outward and the inward. Even the child and the most open person, have that which they hide from others. Much goes on within that does not show itself outwardly. In bad people, their cunning purposes, their lurid desires—if not their shame, their self-interest and their safety—lead them to secrete these elemental forces. In good people, there are ten thousand thoughts and aspirations that never can find expression. We never can give utterance to our best things. We think and feel better than we speak. Our most tender and affectionate thoughts seek cover, and will not come out into the glare of day. The best self, like the blood in the human body, though it be the cause of all the life that appears, is itself hidden within the veins and never seen. The real life of every Christian is concealed with Christ in God.

The fact is we have various lives. A certain feline

household companion is said to have *nine*. Everyone of us puts on a different coat to suit a different occasion. Our outward life alone may wear as many as three coats. There is our street coat, our work and public visiting coat—our ways, thoughts, habits and deportment toward society in general. This is generally a very beautifully decorated garment and includes in itself our finest manners and every possibility of courtesy, ceremony, etiquette and refinement. Again there is an inner coat, which we wear at home, less conventional, more easy in its fit, more natural to our true selves, and in which we are known to our family, our intimate friends and our associates. Still further, there is another coat of a very noble and exalted type which clothes and embodies our ideal self, our better manhood, our life as we would like to have it be, and which perhaps few people recognize us as ever wearing, but which we assume at least occasionally in our thoughts. There is also another and very shabby coat in which our worst and basest self at least occasionally figures in its acts. If all these coats of custom and habit and training and outward deportment and fixed obligations of vocation and community be removed from us, there remains at last our real self, our innermost heart, thoughts and feelings, our personality as it appears in the eyes of God, Who seeth the heart, and this we call our inner self.

You will all agree with me therefore, that our inner self is hidden. The question is—where? Where are you rooted? The hidden root of your life tells the story of your character and accomplishments. I know a man over 70 years old who is the keeper of a prison. He is absolutely fearless. He is kind and cheery and a Christian, but ready at any moment to jump in and knock a recalcitrant prisoner down. Where is his secret? In his mother. He had a mother who always said, "There is a bright side to every-

thing.'' That mother, though now dead, is the root of his strength and joy. No tides of vulgarity, wickedness, vice or desperation behind the bars can keep him down. He is rooted right.

Have you ever seen an advertisement in the Philadelphia papers,—''Wanted a bright sunshiny girl. Home and board free in return for the sunshine.'' The root of her life is in her natural spirits. These however, will fade. But you can have a root whose life will never fade. Your life can be ''hidden with Christ in God.'' Out of sight, never seen nor noticed, that Everlasting and Almighty Root will pump strength and joy into you forever, so that you will never grow weak or weary, and that it doth not yet appear what you shall be. Jesus says, ''If a man keep My saying, he shall never see death. The words I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life. If ye continue in my word, ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free.'' Jesus says, ''If a man be born again, he shall enter God's kingdom. He is mine and no one shall ever pluck him out of My hand.'' Jesus says, ''I am the way and the truth and the life. If any man thirst, let him come to Me. I am the light of the world, if any man would see let him look unto Me. I am the bread of life. Let the hungry soul turn to Me and he shall never perish.'' Jesus says, ''Abide in Me, and I in you. I am the vine, ye are the branches. If ye abide in Me ye shall bring forth much fruit. Without Me, ye can do nothing.''

If your life is hidden with Christ, it is independent of the changes that may sweep over your days. It rests in the source of all things, in the secret place of the Most High. You no longer belong to the mere visible order. You are hid and rooted far below. The true spring that feeds you lies deep beneath the surface. The fountains of pleasure, and the silver stream of merry earth may dry up, but

your spring will flow on undiminished. Your friendships and activities may be bedraggled in disappointment, and muddied with rain, but your spring will be as limpid as ever. Things seen will not go deep enough—to touch you. The winds may fret, and the currents may sway, and the black billows may roll, but you will be satisfied and at rest. The peace of God is in your heart. You are fed by hidden manna. Your strength and joy are replenished from a hidden source. Your life is hid with Christ in God. Therefore you are strong. Therefore you are hopeful. Therefore you bloom in the desert. Therefore the fever winds, and the low monotonies of work and home do not dry you up. Therefore the selfishness of those who call themselves your friends, but have proved false to you does not affect you. Therefore your love is satisfied, your labor is crowned with blessing, your strength is growing, your energy will bear fruit and your desires are exalted into glory. You are connected direct with God. His power shines in you. Your candle will never be snuffed out.

O friend where are you rooted? In the shallow garden of your own pleasures, and in the bitter pool of your own desires? No! No! Not there! Not in yourself at all! Your life is hid with Christ in God. Amen.

XIX

THE ALABASTER BOX

"As He sat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious, and she brake the box, and poured it on His head." Mark 14:3.

The great, the beautiful, the pathetic figure in this picture is Jesus. He was moving with the courage of a hero,—to His doom. He shrank from coarseness, from exposure, from shame, and from death. And yet He dared to bear them all.

Someone has said, "Women have strange intuitions, especially in the shadow of death." Does this woman know whence Jesus is headed? Can she sense His end? Does she feel in her heart that He is soon to die? At all events she takes her alabaster vase, perhaps an heirloom and an imported treasure, and snaps the neck so that its precious contents fall upon His head. It is done for His burial. It is a woman's sympathy for the Lord and an appreciation of His goodness shown in the presence of His enemies. She means it as a token of love that spares nothing. So we often pour our spikenard over loved ones when they are slipping away from us. We lavish on them our affections, we try to manifest our love and esteem, we endeavor to let them know how much they mean to us and how anxious we are for their happiness. We cannot help but bless that woman. When all others were deserting Him she came forward; and silently and tenderly poured upon the Saviour the consecrating gratitude of humanity. Properly is she remembered for all time. At the right moment, re-

gardless of cost, she showed her appreciation of Christ's gift to men.

The ministries of life,—a sunny smile toward misery or failure,—a patient encouragement for the unproductive toiler,—trained nursing in the midst of sickness and disease, true charity where there is need and suffering,—helpful guidance in the midst of painful dilemma, these seem so easy;—yet they cost heart's blood. They are the fruit of sacrifice. Somebody has quietly broken the alabaster box, and the air is purified, sanctified and enriched with the uplifting perfume. No real good of any kind do we get that has not cost something to someone. Nor can you help another without some cost to yourself. "Even a grain of wheat must fall into the ground and die before it is able to yield any service. There must be a sowing in tears to reap in joy. Wheat may be kept whole on a dry barn floor for years, and in a mummy's hand for ages is well preserved; but it is devoid of harvest. Jesus came to teach the true law of the harvest, which is no cross, no crown. That which has cost us nothing is worth nothing to others. This country of ours has risen out of the blood of our fathers. It may go to pieces again, despite our art and science, if love is not willing to bring to it the offering of sacrifice. The law of cost is universal. The herd of cattle dies that you may eat. The flower consents to be plucked and wither in order that you may be pleased. The miner crouches in the darkness that you may possess fuel. The furs you prize so highly cost the lives of the creatures that first wore them. The pearl glows from the suffering of the being that produced it. Heaven's throngs wear white robes and wave branches of palm because they have come up out of great tribulation. Even Jesus appears in glory as a Lamb that has been slain; His victory and honor and blessedness are the result of His suffering. This is the mystery of the

Cross that we celebrate in the season of Lent and in the week of Passion. An alabaster box gives out no fragrant odor of incense unless its owner is willing that *it shall be broken.*

The mightiest words in story and sermon and song are those that have entered into our hearts in pain and have emerged in victory:

"The poet dipped his pen and drew
His vivid pictures phrase by phrase
Of skies and misty mountains blue,
Of starry nights and shimmering days.
Men said, 'He seeth marvels pure
His touch is facile, swift and sure.'
The poet's friend was stricken sore;
In tender tears the pen he dipped,
And felt his gentle sorrow o'er,
And traced the sympathetic script.
Men said, 'His heart is kind and true;
The laurel yet shall be his due'.
The poet's child has waxen hands
That hold Death's heavy-scented rose;
She drifts to the far heavenly lands
And draws deep soul as she goes—
He dipped his pen in his heart's wound,
And sobbing wrote, and *thus was crowned.*"

Sometimes the sacrifice comes too late and is unavailing. "Again and again mankind appears to have attained to social power, to city life, to wealth, to ease, and then has broken down beneath the strain. He drained away his strength under the sapping fever of maddening vices." We see sacrifice in the burnt and wasted citadel of Troy. We see it hidden under the dreary darkness of the Dead Sea waves. We see it perishing root and branch under the unsparing sword of Israel, that hewed its hosts to pieces at the going down to Bethoron, and by the waters of Merom. We see it "in the memorial palace of Nineveh and Babylon. Line upon line of soldiers marching in eternal wars; line upon line of captives—men, women, and children—

dragged weeping in chains to desolate exile; line upon line of chariots and prisoners, sacked cities, and remorseless victories;—these mark its path. Written in letters that burn, we read the awful record of the Titanic forces that built up empires. We taste the bitterness of the fight by which the cruel pride of dominant classes has been broken and avenged; and by which the large freedom of humanity has become an element in our growth." "Through wars without, through tumults within, the fight has been fought. Humanity has pressed forward, through the smoke, the ruin, the disaster,—torn, scarred, battered, and blood-stained; and meagre as the prize of victory seems, it is one that we have no choice but to accept as worth the cost."

This has been sacrifice without love. This has been breaking the alabaster box in the struggle for its possession. This has been the trampling down of the weak under the iron heels of the strong. This has been taking of life, instead of its offering. It is a different scene that confronts us on Golgotha. There is the Lamb offering Himself for the sin of the world. There is love slain in its own sweet consent, that love and life might forever be victorious. There is the Good Shephard giving His life as a ransom for many. There is death swallowed up by immortality. No wonder that woman who appreciated her Lord and what He had done for her came forward with her box of precious ointment. No wonder she spent it on Him so cheerfully. No wonder she felt the cost was little, considering the gain.

And the greater the man, the greater the willingness. John Knox said he would preach Christ in St. Andrew's though the Archbishop slay him. Martin Luther said he would go to Worms to confront his enemies though every tile on the housetops were a devil. He did, and the freedom you are enjoying today is the result, in part, of his action. When Drake and the captains of Queen Elizabeth

went out into the streets of Plymouth to get sailors, they told them frankly of the storms of the Pacific, of the reefs beneath the sea, and of the fevers of Panama. But they also told their Devonshire comrades of the glory and the treasure, and the honour of England; and those who were real men signed for that daring service.

Dear friend, Jesus does not ask you to break your alabaster box. But if you love Him, you will do it for Him, and for His children. You will not sacrifice because you must, but because you would. You love it. You want to do it. You cannot be held back from it. Dear friend, Jesus came—not for glory, but for service; not to be exalted but to exalt. He came to give love and life where they were needed and as they were needed. How are you coming? Are you coming to be clothed in fine raiment, and live in king's houses? You may choose easy work if you wish, work that costs you nothing, that involves nothing: but if you do, you must not then be suprised if your hands are empty in the time of the great harvest. For "to him that loveth little shall little be given." Amen.

XX

THE WRONG WAY AND THE RIGHT WAY

"But when the Pharisees had heard that He had put the Sadducees to silence, they were gathered together. Then one of them, which was a lawyer, asked Him a question, tempting Him, and saying, 'Master, which is the great commandment in the law?'" Matthew 22:34-36.

In this morning's Gospel, two people ask a Question. The one is a lawyer. The other is the Saviour. Both are concerned about religion. Both wish to get at the heart of the matter. The question of the lawyer deals with the outside of the subject; the question of the Saviour drives straight to the heart of it.

When you go forth to enlist as a soldier, you can go seeking to escape the service, or desiring to enter it. You can be looking for a loophole in the military laws through which you may slip exempt; or you can be a burning patriot desirous of defending your country. In the first instance, you will ask questions about the law. In the second, the law will be a little thing; and the great cause itself will absorb your mind.

It would not seem fair to the lawyer, who asked the question concerning the great commandment, to say that he was looking for a loophole through which to escape from religion. He may have been very much in earnest, though he did put a test question to tempt Jesus. But at all events, he took the wrong method of approaching the subject. He looked at religion from the outside. Now religion is an in-

side thing,—a living thing—a matter of the heart; and all mere reasoning or discussing of intellectual questions connected with the subject, will not touch the real center. To ask what laws you must keep to be religious, whether you must give one tenth of your income, whether you may participate in a Sunday excursion, whether you can lead in a masquerade or be in attendance at a dance, whether it is enough to come to service on Communion Sundays, or whether you may prepare festal meals on the Sabbath, shows that your mind is dwelling on the outside of the subject, and that the matter has not really touched and taken deep hold of your heart.

On the other hand, to ask the question which the Saviour proposes,—to whom have you given your heart? What is your deepest love, where are you most closely attached, to what do you cling with all the strongest roots of your being, is your heart growing up into God, what are you thinking most of, and, what do you think of Christ and in what relationship do you stand to Him?—that is going to the very root of the matter.

If we have planned to erect a magnificent building, and our thoughts are chiefly on the forms of the shingles we shall lay on the roof, or on the tints and colorings of the paint with which we shall decorate the surface, we are touching only the outside of the subject. The really great questions,—where shall the money come from, what purposes shall the building serve, what shall the foundations be or what good artisans can we secure for the erection of the structure,—are neglected.

A religion concerned chiefly with outside things is a poor religion. The lawyer's question is the wrong way of getting at the subject: the Saviour's question, which goes straight to the center, is the right way.

For this reason our Lord in answering the lawyer did

not mention any deeds or enumerate any prohibitions, as the sum and substance of religion; but said, Religion is a question of your relation to the Source of all power, all goodness, all help, all strength and salvation. How are you connected with God? Do you care for Him? Has He a hold on you above all else? Is your heart deeply attached to Him? Do you love Him with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind? If you do, the rest is easy. If you do not, all the rest will not count.

Love is the fulfilling of the law. Laws are easy when love is present. Love furnishes power in good measure, filled up, and running over. Love drives selfishness out. Love is overmastering and makes all things easy. Love, and not law: the inside and not the outside command or prescription, is the secret of life; and causes life to spring up into fullness and perfection. Love makes work easy. Love makes goodness easy. Love makes giving easy. Love makes sacrifice and self-denial easy. Love stores us with power. Love of Him in Whom we live and move and have our being, recreates our life, and fills it with greatness and glory and perfection.

Just look at love's opposite for a moment. Hatred renders you restless. Hate clenches your hands. Hate rings your voice into hardness. Hate makes your speech wild and shrill and shrieking. Hate transforms your face into ugliness, convulsing it with low passion, marking it with hard lines, and filling it with the ungainliness of bitter reprisal.

To love God, and to live in His love, is the center of all life, all goodness, and all glory. If you do this, the lines of your personality will stand true. If you do it not, your personality will be warped, and its lines will become more and more strained, sinister, sodden and seditious.

Even in national affairs the religion of the soldier and the citizen must be that of full love to God and man. It is in this spirit that the Christian must contemplate the terrible events through which we are now passing. If the sufferings which this great war lays upon the innocent, breed only feelings of bitterness and hatred; if they are met with the resolve to return the same in kind with interest to the oppressor, then this war will prove but one more chapter in the long story of bitterness and hatred of which history is full. But if the sufferers can learn from Christ His lesson of forgiveness; if they can see in their experience what He suffered as the price of their salvation, then the outcome of the great struggle will be to draw men closer to God and to make them more kindly to each other. The spirit of suspicion and distrust will change any war from a war of government into one of peoples, and make it the tragic and heartbreaking thing it is. It is only love to God and man that can make and preserve our natures sweet and trustful and glorious amid the dark clouds of the crisis in which we are now enveloped.

2. We have looked at the first question and its divine answer. It was an inquiry as to The Great Law. We turn now to the second and more searching question,—the question of the Great Personality. Jesus asked them, "What think ye of Christ?"

Religion is something more than a great law. It needs something outside of yourself to look up to, to lean on and to trust. It needs a great personality. The lawyer had not thought of this personal side of religion. But as the teacher is more than the school, and makes the school; and the mother is more than the home, and makes the home; so Christ is more than the law, and makes and constitutes our religion. He is the living center of our trust and hope.

He is not only the Light of the world, but He is its Way, its Truth and its Life.

In Christ all good laws meet, and are perfectly obeyed; in Christ all good law is perfectly and finally expounded; in Christ all penalties and infractions are paid for. In Christ all guilt brought on by transgression of the law is wiped out. In Christ the law ceases to terrify us. In Christ we have a living, loving refuge from the bad effects of law and lawlessness.

In Christ, Who not only represents us before the law, and pays our damages, and puts us on our feet again, but Who also opens for us the door to the heart of God, true religion is to be found. He is our Prophet. With love, He opens to us the Truth. He is our Priest. With love, He loads upon Himself our curse. He is our King. In love He becomes the perfect incarnation of our hopes, and fills us with joy through His promises. He is more than law. He has a voice. We hear its loving tones. He has a hand; we feel its tender and supporting touch. He has an eye that weeps for us. He has a heart that opens to us. He leads us by His counsel; He feeds us by His Word; He comforts us by His assurances; He saves us by His blood; He intercedes for us by the power of His mighty deeds; He represents us in the courts and at the right hand of the Majesty on high. In death, He takes charge of us. In Heaven He clothes us with immortality and opens to us the doors of the mansions He has prepared for us.

Here then is a religion with power, with value, with a living leadership, and with an assurance that no calamities can overturn. It is something better than the lawyer asked for, and something better than many people look for. A religion without Christ is a mere shadow; a religion in Christ is the real thing, the substance of all good things.

Have you this religion? What is your relation to

Christ? How fully do you rest your heart in Him? How completely are you growing and being strengthened in His grace?

Oh, yes, we have a sure thing. We lose all by giving ourselves to Christ but we gain all in having given ourselves to Him. In him all things are ours, and our hearts are sweetly at rest.

This morning we testify our gratitude to Him, and our appreciation of His value, by bringing and solemnly laying one day's income upon His altar. Every morning will we lift up our eyes unto Him and receive His benediction.

"He upon His heart has taken
All the world with conflict shaken,
Hurt by sin, by grief oppressed;
Ye who heavy burdens carry
Come, He loves you, do not tarry,
Come and He will give you rest.

Every fetter shall be broken,
In His Cross we find the token
And the pledge of liberty;
He will banish all oppression
Till, throughout His vast possession
Every creature shall be free.

And unto His Father bringing
All His children, glad and singing,
We His glorious face shall see.
In love-marshalled hosts before Him
All the Nations shall adore Him,
Strong in life and liberty."

Amen.

XXI

THE CONVERSION OF A SOUL

"Repent ye, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts 3:19.

There are very few things which are of value to us in their natural state. The wilderness must be cut down and converted into farms. Wheat must be thrashed and milled and worked up into bread. Wool must be washed and carded and woven into cloth. Coal must be converted into heat, petroleum into oil, naphtha and paraffine; ore into iron; and iron into steel. Even gold must be separated from its baser elements of sand and quartz, and highly refined before it is of great service to us.

Now, as few things are worth very much to us in their natural state; so we are not worth very much to God in our natural state. To be of value to Him, as bread, wool, oil, coal and iron are to us, we must be converted. It is true there are in us certain powers, energies, purposes and lovelinesses that are precious. For we are made in the image of God. But we dare never forget that this image is defaced and sullied. We are like the once valuable machines that find their way to the scrap pile. However beautiful and precious they were, they must now be cut apart and battered to pieces. They have good material in them, but it must be melted over, and puddled again, and rolled anew, and thus converted into a quality, size and strength that will meet all the requirements of its owner.

When you ask then, "What is the meaning of Conversion," I would say: It is to be melted over again. It is

cutting man's pride and supposed virtues down to scrap. It is eliminating his sins, and making him over again, rolling him out anew to fit God's requirements.

The great majority of men think however, they are too good for the scrap pile. They feel that really they are very virtuous. Many of the most respectable men in this town, never think of God, or whether they come up to His requirements of living; and yet these same men would feel highly offended were they told that they belong on the scrap pile. Nevertheless that is where they belong, in the Kingdom of God. They may be perfectly-polished driving-wheels, running smooth and true every day; they may be fitted out with fine gold mountings; but there is a fault, a little grain of sand or a tiny crack somewhere in their hearts, which render them imperfect for God's use; and He will throw them out on the Scrap,—unless they are converted.

Do not make the mistake, dear friend, of taking yourself at your own valuation. When a group of the best men this world has ever produced, were valuing themselves in accordance with their ideas of their own importance, Christ turned to them earnestly with the words: "Verily, verily I say unto you except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." In other words it was the scrap pile for those good men, unless they were made over again.

A man who is unwilling to be melted over, though he be the President of the United States, has neither part nor lot in the kingdom of heaven. A man must be willing to be born again before God can use him. He must be willing to start anew, to put away his pride, and to become like a modest little child, which covets no earthly power, has not yet developed evil lust (though it is in him) and is ready to be controlled by those above him with submission and truthfulness.

The word conversion through the whole Bible means something very different from that usually attributed to it by evangelists and in revivals. Conversion, according to the Scripture, is not a change of feelings, but a change of life. Or rather, it is a change of mind, will, character, heart and purpose, which shows itself in a change of life.

It is preceded, as our text says, by repentance. "*Repent* ye, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Repentance and conversion are inseparable in the Scriptures. They are never found, the one without the other. Too many of our modern conversions, especially those which take place in revivals are loose in their character. They often omit repentance; or are satisfied with the shedding of a few moments' tears. And so all too often there is no actual remaking of the one who is converted. Let us then re-emphasize the clear teaching of the Scripture, there can be no conversion unless there is repentance.

This leads us to ask, "What really is repentance?" In plain language, it is an aversion to sin, and as our text says "a desire to have it blotted out." Now conversion means to be disgusted with, to turn away from, and to be done with. A man who repents therefore is one who is nauseated by his misdeeds and is resolved to have nothing further to do with them. It is more than regretting one's sins and wishing they did not exist. You know a man may cry about his sins and become highly excited concerning them and still love them. But repentance is the giving them up. It is not the feeling about it, but the actual change in one's direction. Some cars cannot switch on to the right track without a good deal of smoke and commotion; others instead of switching smoothly, jolt over the rails and attract a good deal of attention. But never mistake the smoke and the confusion for repentance. Repentance is the turn you make and the direction in which you are traveling.

In studying the nature of conversion a little more closely, let us return to our first figure. You know that the Pennsylvania Railroad is dissatisfied with the rails made by the United States Steel Corporation. They are heavy and they look all right, but they break in emergencies. The cell structure is wrong. Now the trouble with any man who does not love God above all else is that his soul structure is wrong. He needs to be converted.

If any of you have seen the great steel converters at Bethlehem or Pittsburgh, you know that two changes must take place in the very heart of the iron before it becomes good steel. One of these is the blowing out of the impurities and the other, the blowing in the oxygen. Similarly when a man is converted, there must be first, the blowing out of impurities; then second a blowing in of a new and higher power. The blowing out of impurities,—the getting rid of sin,—is repentance. That is taking the bad out of the structure. The blowing in of oxygen, the acquisition of new qualities and powers—is faith. That puts the justification, the redemption of Christ, into the structure of man's heart. That fills him with love for God and the desire to please Him. These two things, then, repentance and faith, constitute conversion.

But please notice that the *power* of the steel converter to change the structure, lies in the blast. The energy comes from without not from within. And so it is with the soul. No man can convert himself,—can of his own volition and effort bring about repentance and faith. There is a power from above that works on him, and which causes it all. That power is the Word of God and the Spirit of God. Let no man say that this conversion is of himself. Let no man say on such and such a day and at such and such an hour he made up his mind he was going to do better. He did not effect the change. It was the Spirit of God working

in him and upon him. The Spirit of God made him see the folly of his sin, the Spirit of God showed him the glory of the right, the Spirit of God prompted him to turn. He only yielded to the power of the Spirit. Conversion is never the result of purely human thought and effort; it is ever the effect of the Word and the Spirit which have been working, perhaps unnoticed and unheeded for a long period of time.

But let us look for a moment at the results of conversion. They are not invisible and hard to find. Of course conversion is not a chemical change such as takes place in the molicules of steel. But it is a vital change notwithstanding. It is a change something like that which is frequently made in a telephone exchange. Your heart and mind and soul are like such an exchange. Into them messages from the world without and impulses from yourself within, are continually intruding and making suggestions.

Now the change of which I have just spoken is simply this. In conversion, you cut off many of the old wires. You prevent impulses that come up from below from making any impression upon you. Worldly feelings and the pleasures of sin can no longer talk to your heart. You have severed their relationship with you. You do not get their ring. In short, if converted, as the Apostle says, you are "dead to sin and alive to God." Your wires now run upward. The old habits will try to reach your will. They will demand your number. They will not resign their influence without a struggle. But you have an aversion to them. They are repulsive to you. You do not want to have anything to do with them. You have cut them off. Do not be discouraged if now and then some evil habit tries to renew its former connection with you. Do not give up because it is persistent in its endeavors.

Keep the wires cut by daily repentance and reliance on God's word, and you will be safe. Remember that conversion contrary to your own desires and the teaching of some modern evangelists, does not come all at once. Henry Ward Beecher once said, "Being born again is slow work" and he was right. Most of you are converted but you must be diligent and untiring in your Christian service if you do not wish to degenerate.

But O what relief, what satisfaction and what joy are the results of conversion. He who is converted is at peace with God, aye is in tune with God. He knows that God is no longer by justice bound to condemn him and to punish him; to withhold from him the fullest manifestations of his love and grace. He feels that because all is right with God he is an object of the Father's tender care and that no matter what may befall him it will be for his benefit. And that consciousness is the most reassuring, the most inspiring and the most exhilarating which you or I can possess. None other can give us such comfort and encouragement in our occasions of trial and adversity, such poise and confidence in our hours of toil and striving, such color and such permanence to our times of happiness. But without conversion you cannot attain this consciousness.

Conversion, however, not only secures that blessed estate which springs from a right relationship with God; it also secures that tranquillity and inner joy which exist where all is right with conscience. Conscience when offended is like a troublesome relative who seems to enjoy thrusting his unwelcome attentions upon you. It points an accusing finger at your misdeeds and your failings. It pictures in vivid colors the pain and shame of discovery and punishment. It interferes with your enjoyment of ill-gotten gains and pleasures. And what is more it will not let you go until you throttle it, or heed its admonitions. Conversion,

however, squares conscience and silence its murmurings. Be converted and conscience will trouble you no more. Be converted and conscience will pat you on the back and pledge coöperation. Be converted and conscience will beam on you with approval. And when conscience looks upon you with its favor you can enter into life without fear or hesitation, hold your head up and look every man in the eye, and feel that no matter what your duty you have performed it and performed it well.

But your peace will have an even wider scope than this. If conversion makes all right with God, and it makes all right with conscience; then it also makes all right with your future. You have no reason, if converted, to worry about the dispensations of Providence; to tremble at the thought of death and of the judgment; or to be anxious about your eternal habitation. You can be absolutely sure of God's love and favor, look forward to a welcome in His eternal kingdom, and anticipate with pleasure the revelation of its glory. Surely this should make for your comfort and felicity. Surely this should stimulate and encourage you in your daily Christian life. Surely this should add much sweetness to the cup you are draining day by day.

My dear friend, God urges you to repent and be converted. He urges you to do it tonight. Goethe, the greatest of the German poets, declares, the man who grasps the moment as it flies, he is the real man. Be the real man. Hear this message. Let the structure of your heart be changed. Let God's Spirit blow out the sin, and blow strength into your soul. God be with you, dear friend, God give you swiftness and steadiness. Turn. Take the simple step. Do not fling God's grace aside. You have nothing to lose, and all to gain—if you repent and are converted and your sins are blotted out. Amen.

XXII

THE SECRET OF STRENGTH

"Stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."
I Cor. 16:13.

The greatest battlefields of the human race have not been on mountain pass, or inland path, or maritime plain. It is not Marathon, or Syracuse, or Pharsalia, or Tours, or Hastings, or the sinking of the Spanish Armada, or Blenheim, or Waterloo, or Gettysburg, or Petersburg, or Santiago, or Port Arthur, or Verdun, or the Argonne that has decided the fate of mankind. The great battles of the race have been fought in an invisible theater, in a quieter and loftier realm than the warline of opposing armies; in the mind of Sargon and Nebuchadnezzar, of Ptolemy and Cæsar, of Martel and Charlemagne, of Napoleon and Marlborough, of Grant and Schley, of Foch and Pershing. The fate of American independence hung in the balance in the *mind* of Washington; the fate of the Union was determined and mirrored in the heart and mind and still sad countenance of Lincoln.

The real battles are the inner battles. The first clash always comes on in the soul. The metal in the gun is only the creature of the man behind the gun. Silence the man, and you silence the gun. Silence the heart, and the flag comes down. Silence the will, and the cause is lost. Silence the spirit and the soul, and the city lies low in destruction and in death. The great battles, the great successes and the great defeats of your life are not wrought and trans-

acted, but only culminated in the outer world. The decisive moments, the crises of your life, take place in your soul. The world sees not what is going on; it only gradually and in after years becomes cognizant of the effects. Consequently the great soldier is the man who knows how to fight the battles that go on within him. The boy's battles in school or on the athletic field, the man's battles in commerce, in politics, or in the field of public achievement, amount to very little, except as registers of what has taken place on the inner field of personality. They are not the real thing, except incidentally. The real thing is over long ago, and has settled matters perhaps before the outer battle ever began or the first flag was hoisted or the first gun trained and fired.

These things being so, how important our text becomes. It sounds exactly like the instructions of a captain to his troop as they are about to go under fire which will be hot and trying. "Stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong."

It is *manliness* you must exhibit,—the will and the courage to meet the issue in your own soul; and then to go out into the world and meet it there. It is *manliness* you want; the will and the courage to take a stand against the bad, and not to flinch or rest until you have driven it back to cover. Not to play with fire, not to parley with Satan, not to try the good thing that he offers you, but to send him beaten and exasperated back to hell, where he belongs—that is your first and most important objective. "The conscience of every man recognizes courage as the foundation of manliness, and manliness as the perfection of character." In proportion as you gain this spirit of courage, self-sacrifice, and loyalty to the Lord above yourself, so far will you rise above circumstances and wield them at your will. We have the words of one of the greatest

generals of modern times (Napoleon) that even in war, moral power is to physical as three to one. Be manly therefore. Remember "there is always room for a man of force, and he makes room for many more."

The secret of strength is the willingness to meet the issue in the name of the Lord. It is the willingness to go in and stand and make the last sacrifice. "We talk of *bearing* the Cross," says Ruskin, "as if it was only a thing to be carried, instead of to be crucified upon. 'They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh, with the affections and lusts.'" Such a man is a fine man, a strong man; a manly man. "Stand fast. Quit you like men. Be strong." This is the command of the General to His favorite regiment. This is the command of the Son of God, to you and me whom He has chosen and redeemed. But in this great bustling, modern world how few men are manly in such a high sense of the term! How few are ready to accept the challenge! How few will take the stand! How few have the courage to show and live their colors! They hide their best thoughts. They stifle their loftiest aspirations. They conform to the pleasure-seeking ethics of the common crowd. They crucify their best, instead of their worst selves, for the sake of getting through life comfortably. They slink away, whenever a real issue presents itself to their soul. They fight no great battles, and the only victories they gain are sordid and bespattered with sensual or silvery slime. "Good God!" said Napoleon, "How rare men are." But there is a reason for the scarcity of good men. It is because too few fight the evil in the right place,—in the battle arena of their own soul. They do not know how to say, "Get thee *hence* Satan." A man's mind must learn to stand fast and be strong in three places:

1. *In His Convictions.*
2. *In His Conscience.*
3. *In His Conduct.*

1. William Penn once said, "Men are beside themselves when they transgress against their convictions." Only he who has convictions, and stands by them, is a man. "No human power can force the intrenchments of strong conviction. You cannot capture a man of solid conviction. Many waters cannot drown, and burning fires cannot consume, the truth for which he stands. He is in a position to stand against the world. He is a strong man.

"*Stand fast,*" says our text, "*in the faith.*" These last words describe the *source* of conviction. Faith puts power into the soul. "I have *believed* therefore have I spoken." Christ pinned His faith to God's Word. In each of the three battles which constituted His great temptation, He took His stand on what God wanted. "It is written," He said each time: and with that, "It is written," He was invulnerable. Do you know God's Word? Has it filtered down into your soul? Has it strengthened the tissues of your will? Has it built up in your blood the iron of a heavenly right and truth? Then and only then can you meet every crisis, and when you meet it, win.

2. But we need to be strong, not only in our convictions, but also in our *conscience.* We never trust a man who says he has no conscience. He may be strong; he may be reckless; but he will also be selfish and brutal. George Washington said, "Labor to keep alive in your breast that little spark of celestial fire, called conscience." Nothing so upholds a man, and prevents him from falling in battle at unexpected moments as a sound and responsive conscience. It points out right and wrong on the instant. It hoists the signal on the highest tower. It keeps him

close to the solid bedrock of truth. It is worth more in defence than the polished armor of Saul, or the ponderous brazen shield of Goliath. It sounds a true note amid the smoke and din of conflict. It is the flag that guides him safely through the perils of the valley and up and over the ridge.

I am afraid that even many Christians do not appreciate the value of conscience. It does not seem to be made much of, in our modern methods of education. As between information and dexterity and conscience, I would choose as the most manly man, the man of conscience. Do not abandon your conscience. Do not let it lie behind the door like an old rusty musket. Keep it always in use. It is a prime source of your inner strength.

3. If a man meets the crisis aright with his conviction, and in his conscience, he will have little difficulty in meeting it in his conduct. He may make mistakes in the battle; but he will right himself. William Penn once said, "You can judge the value of a man as you do that of a watch, by the way he goes. It is not the showy case, the pleasing face, the finely decorated exterior, the jeweled hand, that determines quality here, but it is the way the watch or the man goes." Convictions are a man's mainsprings. Conscience is a man's hair-springs; and if both are perfect, the results in conduct will be substantial.

And now in this Lenten season, the Lord appeals to you all, to fight the battles in your soul; to meet each crisis as it comes; and through all to manifest steadfastness ("Stand fast in the faith");—manliness ("Quit you like men";—and strength ("Be strong"). Then will you reveal His presence in your soul; then will you, on the firing line of today, uphold His kingdom; then will you be bearing His standard toward Zion; then will you be acclaimed as the hero in a greater victory than that of

Themistocles at Marathon, or Charles Martel at Tours, or William the Conqueror at Hastings, or the Duke of Marlboro at Waterloo, or Grant at Petersburg, or Moltke at Sedan, or Schley at Santiago.

Then will you see that "he who has conquered his own cowardly spirit, has conquered the whole world." Then will God put gladness into your heart and new songs into your mouth. Then will you see how God stretches out His right hand, and the arm of Satan sinks as a storm into the sea. Then will you cry, "Sing ye to the Lord, for He hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath He thrown into the sea." Amen.

XXIII

THE THREE PILLARS

"And now abideth faith, hope and charity, these three." I Cor. 13:13.

"To build, to build! that is the noblest art of all!" exclaims Longfellow. Perhaps the first structure ever erected by human hand was a *home*, beneath whose rude shelter a happy but anxious father wished to provide some dearest spot in all the earth for the comfort and protection of his loved ones. After the home, doubtless came the buildings on the farm, for the shelter of cattle, and for the storage of crops. Today the energies of human life are turned toward the erection of houses for business and manufacture; large stores, towering office structures, great railway terminals, heavy granite piles for the housing of gold and silver, elegant hotels for the accommodation and entertainment of guests, and vast halls and academies for the amusement and education of the public. But amid all the massive piles of stone and steel and marble that lift their heads high above the hum and noise of the populace in every city, there is one sort of structure that stands preëminent. It is the house of God, where all below is indicative of might and strength, and all above is significant of light and truth and love.

The churches of a land are and should be its greatest structures, for in their sculptured stone the architect can express a heart of faith and hope and love. They are the only buildings in the world dedicated to power—infinite

power; to truth—absolute truth; to love—divine and perfect love, and whose every object is sublime. They are the only cathedrals upon earth that enshrine the invisible realities,—these three, faith, hope, love. We have buildings enough devoted to money. We have buildings enough erected for enjoyment. We have buildings enough for shelter and for art. But man needs to be lifted out of these earthly things and to be drawn upward to his heavenly destiny.

It is true that God, that Jesus Christ, that religion, with its three great pillars, faith, hope, and love, cannot be rendered visible in stone. It is true that God Himself is a greater builder than any human hand. Notwithstanding this, however, God is pleased with human effort and sacrifice spent for the glory of His name, and with buildings set apart for the spreading of His kingdom.

So long as we live upon earth, so long must God's work be carried on in structures of the earth. So long as God's Church needs to hear His Word, to dispense His sacraments, and to teach His truths, so long should the forms which He Himself has given, vault, and arch, and spire, and pinnacle, and battlement, be used to dignify and typify and symbolize the great realities of truth, love, hope, salvation, and everlasting life.

And it is a particularly gratifying thing when God's people come to see that not only the needs of the manly and the mature, not only the religion of the sublime and the severe, but also the wants of the weak and the small, of those little ones who were taken up so fondly by their Lord, and whom He loved so deeply, are subserved. For childhood holds within its feeble heart a mighty faith which the grasp of manhood can often not retain; and which it is the effort of utmost age to recover.

Let us then for a moment give our attention to the

three fundamental realities that underly this building which has been erected for childhood, youth and age by the Church. They are FAITH, HOPE, LOVE.

I. FAITH is our confidence in the reality and the saving power of that which is not seen. Faith is the great foundation of Christianity. Faith is the Yes of the heart to the offer of God to redeem us and to lead us to perfection.

Faith is a universal necessity in life. There is not a residence ever erected for a home, which is not put up on the faith of the man who builds it. There is not a business house in this city which has not to some extent been erected on faith, on good will, on good name, and perhaps on credit. Faith is the foundation of all our finance. Faith is at the root of all our undeveloped resources. But the faith to which this house is dedicated, and on which it is built, is a peculiar faith. It is a Christian faith. It is a faith in the redemption provided and offered to all the world by the great and glorious Son of God.

Every Church in a busy city is a Confession of this lofty Faith. Every towering spire that rises beyond the soot of the stacks, and above the height of the parapets, points the heart that passes thoughtlessly below, upward to the Lord of Life. Every silent and stately altar is a witness to the rushing world that there is One greater than the world, to Whom we cling, and in Whom lieth our salvation.

So here in this most modern and bustling of American cities, you have reared that old and time-stained banner of the Evangelical Lutheran faith, which has been through conflicts innumerable and is hallowed in our eyes. Here before all the world you have made great and public

acknowledgment of fidelity to that faith. Here you have consecrated yourselves to the teaching, the maintenance, and the defense of the Conservative Reformation of that Faith. *Your* faith has *Christ* as its center. *Your* Gospel has *Christ* as its center. Your administration of Holy Baptism has the new life of Christ as its center. Your participation in the Lord's Supper has the body and blood of Christ as its center. Your Church has Christ *only* as its head, and your faith rises to the joyous confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God." For testimony to this faith you as a people were born. For the maintenance of your faith you have lived and warred. You know what you have believed. Your thought has not sprung up in a night. Historic and world-wide, connecting with the long past, and with the long future, and glowing with the vitality of truth in the present, is this faith of yours. You bear witness in a communion that believes in being no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, after the wiles of error. You are putting before the Church in all this region a steadfast testimony to the truth in love, that men may grow up in all things unto Him Who is our Head.

We cannot be sufficiently thankful for the faith of our fathers, which brings both *fixity* and *freedom,* which is at once *simple* and *supreme,* and which ushers us into the glorious liberty of the children of God. We cannot be sufficiently thankful to the founders of the General Council for the nature of the tabernacle which *they* bequeathed to us and in which they provided for liberty and union, now and forever, one and inseparable. Ours is a Lutheranism which is continental and international. As the Church of Christ, we are fostering not a sectional but a world-wide spirit. Our Saviour said, "Go ye out into *all the world.*" He said, "Ye shall be witnesses both in Jerusalem and

unto the uttermost parts of the earth." And this is the spirit of the General Council. It is a broader stream than the stream of any race, and is ready to greet hand in hand the children of the pure faith from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof. Let us then make our many nationalities and our numerous sectional feelings and activities which by nature are a source of weakness, an instrumentality of power. If our international character be a cause of difficulties, let is also become unto us a source of our strength, our joy and our pride.

In the name of the General Council, of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in North America then, confessing with you, our dear Lord Jesus Christ, and having with you one God, one faith, one baptism, and one hope of our calling, I have come this morning to extend its congratulations to you on this occasion; to praise your faith in the past, as Jesus did that of the centurion; and to admonish you to steadfastness of service in the future, as Christ did the First Church in Jerusalem.

II. HOPE. Faith is the root of Christianity. We are justified by Faith. The great foundation of our religion is faith. But faith is not a dead block of stone: it has a life growing out of it, and as it springs up from root to stem, it is transformed into hope.

As I go along the streets of our American cities, I am convinced that what our young people, and what our busy men, and what our amusement-satiated populace need is not more bread, not more education, not more recreation, not more money, but *more and better* hope. What we want is eyes that look upward filled with hope. What we want is steps that move on in elasticity because they are filled with hope. What we want is hands that are active and willing because they are animated by hope. And there is

only one hope in the world that never can be dashed to the ground, that will never be dissipated, and that will never disappoint its possessors. That hope is the hope of the Christian.

Faith is the Christian's upward look, hope his forward look. As the Apostle says, "Hope watches with outstretched hand." Hope brings with it endurance. It enables us to carry heavy loads and burdens. It is the greatest incentive to our action. How long the men of the Old Testament looked forward to and were heartened by the "hope of Israel" whose promises were as a lamp shining in a dark place! But when Christ came, by His resurrection from the dead, humanity was begotten again unto a better and living hope. It is that hope which now sustains it. It is that hope which is the very anchorage of our souls. Because of the hope that is laid up for us in the heavens we are able to face the battles of life with undaunted mien, to bear ills joyfully, to endure contempt and persecution, and instead of being disheartened by our trials and disappointments to hold up our heads with increasing strength and courage.

And it is to hope, particularly, that this building is dedicated. If faith is the mother, hope is the daughter. It is an active grace, a lively grace, the crowning characteristic of youth. It is the main-spring in the soul of the child which sets all its wheels in motion. It is a vigorous principle. It is the source of the energy of the Church. It sets the head and heart to work and animates us to do our utmost. It knows no impossibility. May the youth of this congregation, and this building in which it is to be trained and brought up, become the strength and inspiration of her future. May this Church not only be sound in faith, but also living in hope. Then will she accomplish even more in the future than all that has been

brought to pass during the years that are gone. "Awake, awake: put on thy strength, O Zion, put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city." For hope is

"The beauteous sun
Which colors all it shines upon!
The light-house of life's dreary sea;
The star of immortality!
Fountain of feeling, young and warm
A day-beam bursting through the storm;
A blossom of that radiant tree
Whose fruit the angels only see;
A portion of the world to come
When those who trust and love
Escape their doom."

III. CHARITY. The Apostle Paul sketches the outlines of this supreme Christian grace in one of the most sublime word paintings the world has ever heard. The word "charity" is the rich, old-time word for love. Love separates itself into four different kinds.

1. First there is that which is based on fancy. Fancy is the lowest and most capricious part of our imagination. It is our nature afloat and flying without any restraint of sense, or soberness of reason, but giving itself up passively to pictures, day-dreams, reverie, or recollection of things we like. Love that springs from fancy is as aerial, as light, as unreliable, as dreamy and sentimental as is the fancy from which it has arisen. It is a blind love, based on no realities, doomed to be shattered into broken crystals as surely as the soap-bubble bursts under pressure after its short flight from the mouth of the pipe, in which it displays its rainbow tints, and its sailing aspirations to rise and dwell amid the clouds. Such an insubstantial love is unworthy of men who are made in the image of God, who are gifted with minds to think and eyes to see, who are of a destiny to rise superior to the fascination of the moment, and not to be enthralled by the fancy of the

moment, and who are sealed by the precious blood given by the Love of Christ. It is not the sentimental love of Fancy after which we are to follow.

2. The second kind of love is that of Desire, whose chief characteristic is its strenuous selfishness of purpose. It is not dreamy. It is a burning fire. It sacrifices self and friends, future and past, joy and peace, salvation and sincerity, upon the altar of its flame. It is a hideous thing. It is sung and decked by pagan poets of all the ages, but there is no word for it on all the pages of the New Testament. Prominently as it is set forth in all the classics of old, the love of passion is shut out from the purity of the Word of God. Men who are capable of the lofty love that God has to give, will turn from it as they would from the cup of hemlock offered to the criminal.

3. A third kind of love is a natural affection we have for those whom we like. It is a rather easy-going affair—a neighborly love and attachment to kindred and friends. In its higher forms it manifests itself in a good feeling for all mankind. It is philanthropy and benevolence. It is prone to overlook faults, is indulgent, is fond of those who are near it, and takes care not to hurt their feelings. It generally allows others to have their way, shields them from blame and harm, is generous, gentle, not easily provoked, suffereth long and is kind, envieth not, is benevolent and charitable among the poor, and possesses many of the excellences ascribed by the Apostle to a still higher type of love. But it falls short in many stronger qualities of sacrifice, of devotion, and of recognition of the real grounds of true and eternal love.

4. Beyond and above all these lower types of love, there is that quality of love or charity of which the Apostle is speaking. It is the peculiarly Christian love. It is high

above the love of natural inclination and personal friendship. It is the love which decides the direction of the will. It is the love which the Father has for the Son, and the love which He had for the world when He gave His only begotten Son to die for it. It is the love of self-denying and compassionate devotion to other persons. When the Father says, "I have loved Thee with an everlasting love;" when the Son gave Himself a ransom for many, when He laid down His life for the sheep, when the Lord asked Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me," it is this love that is spoken of. It is a love that is absorbed in its object,—a love in which we are what we are, not for ourselves but for God. It is a love which contemplates likeness to Christ, rather than enjoyment of personal affinity. This is the love of Christ for His Church. This is the love of the Christian for all those who are one with Him in devotion to the will of the Father.

This is the highest type of love. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us. The love of Fancy is light, and does not take hold of any of the great realities, compared with this love. The love of Desire is cruel, strong, and bitter, and the essence of selfishness as compared with this. The love of inclination and natural affection is a mere matter of disposition and temperament; and does not reach into the heart and fill it with eternal life, as does this,—the greatest, most glorious, and most divine of all the types of love.

Christian love at the very least is that of respect. However we differ from others in aim, station, or taste, the very least we can do is to show them respect. Respect is not fellowship, but it is that quality which we owe even to an enemy. It is this that Jesus had in mind when He said, "Love your enemies." And again, "If ye salute your brethren only, do not even the Publicans the same?" The

love of respect requires that we be to others as we would have them be to us, and that we do for them what the Good Samaritan did for the Jew. It is at its least, a spirit of fairness, generosity and interest.

But there is something more in charity than the mere love of respect. It is the desire to coöperate. Coöperation is less than brotherhood but it is the recognition and support of common aims and common ends. This impels us to work with others for the welfare of society and the glory of Christ's kingdom. Would to God that we all felt this inclination more keenly! What a world of good would result if Christians would always coöperate where they can approve the means and the end!

There is a still higher degree of love. It is the stage of fellowship. Fellowship is a far more intimate thing than coöperation. It is a life together. Coöperation is a limited association for definite ends, but fellowship is an unlimited association in spiritual life. Fellowship throws open all the doors; unlocks all the vaults, and bids the other one enter and abide in our soul and heart.

There is still one more,—Communion. Communion is the complete occupation of the mind and soul by another. It lives constantly in the others presence. His image, character, and conduct are indispensable. His wishes, welfare and happiness are an object of first and paramount concern. It was this spirit and longing which made Jesus pray for His disciples that they might be where He was and behold His glory. And it is this same presence and hope which inspire and hearten and thrill the heart of every true disciple.

The vision of God as He is, to see the King in His beauty, is vouchsafed only to love. Love is more perfect than knowledge: for knowledge is truth, and personality is higher than truth. Truth without the seeing eye, with-

out the thinking mind, without the beating heart is dead. Love is personal, love is of the living heart. Truth is the expression, but love is the response of life. Love is the answer of the soul to God. Truth is the abstract description of the highest. Love is the personal and living response of the highest to the highest.

Love is more than Faith or Hope. For Faith and Hope are only anticipation, while Love is *realization.* Faith passes away. So does hope when that which is perfect is come. But Love abideth. God is not Faith, God is not Hope, but God is Love. Love is greater than any other act of the Spirit because it is the essence of eternal life. Joy, peace, rest, satisfaction, communion with God, these are the fruits of love. By faith we are saved, in hope we are renewed, but through love we rise beyond the burdens and the joys of earth, to the home of the Lord Himself. Built on the foundation of faith, and rising in the beautiful walls of hope, the cathedral of our religion lifts itself in the love of God above buttress wall and parapet and pinnacle, and shoots spire-like into the heavens, so high that the huge cross on its summit glows like a spark in the morning light, and shines like a star in the evening sky when the rest of the pile is enveloped in darkness. When all the banks and all the commerce and all the homes of your city shall have felt the wrap of night, and shall be silent in the everlasting darkness, then will the love of God in the Cross of Christ shine out luminous in glory in the sky of everlasting bliss. Amen.

XXIV

THE TRIUMPH OF THE GOSPEL

"For the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea." Habakkuk 2:14.

The world rings today with the glories of war and of conquest. The ground trembles with the concussion of proud and mighty hosts, and of giant guns that enshroud them in curtains of fire. The glory of the sunshine, the glory of peacefully maturing golden harvests, the glory of the silent stars; and the glory of truth, righteousness, brotherhood, childhood, motherhood, hope and happiness are obscured in clouds of dust and lurid flame. The glory of the Cross, and the Crucified, and the banners of the Prince of Peace are trampled under foot. But it shall not always be so. Our text is a warning that the strength and the glory of the nations shall not endure. And history tells us how true it is Pharaoh and his hosts, Babylon and her chariots, Assyria and her coats of mail, Persia and her Xerxes, Greece and her Achilles, Hannibal and his Punic armies, the legions of Rome and her invincible eagles, Attila and his Huns, the Crusaders and the followers of the Crescent with their shining scimitars, Napoleon and his imperial guard, have all been swept from the earth. "They that take the sword shall perish by the sword." Only one glory shall finally prevail. "The earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea."

This is the glory that the Church preaches in this

Epiphany season. Men laugh at us, and tell us that the Church is a back number. And the Church is a back number. But it is also the only forward number on which the world can count. The Church has already outlived every existing rule on the face of the earth. Herod was a mighty warrior but he could not kill the Babe of Bethlehem. The Roman soldiers pierced His heart, but three days afterward they were struck dumb by the sight of His resurrection. The Church has the Promise of God. No power on earth can permanently stay that power that comes not with might, nor with strength, but with the Spirit of the Lord.

The Churches of Lebanon are her only enduring asset. The mills will go. The steel works will go. The railroads will go. The banks will go. The strong men will go. The political leaders will go. But the Church will stay. She will live to bless men and to save them. She has the promise of God. The gates of hell shall not prevail against Her. Mercy is stronger than might. Love is greater than revenge. Righteousness is more imperishable than gold. Truth is better than navies; and the stars in their courses will fight for God.

The glory of the Lord was in the pillar of fire and cloud. The glory of the Lord was in the Shekinah of the Tabernacle. The glory of the Lord inspired the prophets. The glory of the Lord shone in His only begotten Son full of grace and truth. In every word He said and taught, in every deed He wrought, in His death and in His life, in His revelations and in His comforts, there shone forth the goodness and greatness of the Father. He came quietly as the morning dawn, and He shone grandly as the noontide sun. His glory will go behind the passing clouds, but it will never set. He is the Light of the World. . . . . "O righteous Father, the world hath not known Thee, but

I have known Thee. Glorify Thy Son, that they may also glorify Thee. This is life eternal that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent. O Father glorify Thou Me with Thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was. I will that they may behold My glory, which Thou hast given Me; for Thou lovedst Me before the foundation of the world." This was His last great prayer on earth. And the hosts in heaven are still saying: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive honor and glory, praise and thanksgiving forever and ever. Amen."

Our text is a picture of the golden age,—of the time when the glory of Jesus and His Gospel shall fill the hearts of mankind as the sun fills all the earth, and the waters cover the sea. Man shall be redeemed. Perfect life shall be at flood-tide. There shall be nothing left to hurt or destroy. There will be a universal proclamation and acceptance of the Gospel. This knowledge and redemption shall be diffused among all nations. Justice and benevolence shall everywhere prevail. Righteousness and peace shall kiss each other. The bow and spear shall be broken asunder. For the Gospel in its real nature is a harmonizing power. Whenever it comes in its saving efficacy, it transforms the heart, operates against the pride of nations, and dries up the causes of hatred and discord at their fountain head. Its two great principles are first, righteousness—that things and people be right; and second, love—that people appreciating the love of God toward them in Christ, love Him in return and above all; and their brothers as themselves. Where righteousness and love combine and rule, there peace, harmony, prayer and security prevail, for the desire to injure has been taken away and the desire to proclaim glory to God and goodwill to men has become supreme.

"The earth shall be filled with the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea." This text reveals how universally and how easily the Gospel shall prevail. "As the waters cover the sea." The idea of universality could scarcely have been better expressed than by this magnificent simile. We gaze on the illimitable expanse of waters with wonder and awe. We follow its depths far beyond the lowest tide-line to the unfathomed valleys and caverns that form the ocean-bed. We take ship and sail to the uttermost ends of the earth on this continuous expanse. We find that "the lowest depths and most distant shores are filled and covered by the all-diffusive and all-searching element." Thus shall the redemption of Christ fill and cover the surface of the world even to the most distant shores. "Go ye out into all the world," is the command given at Jerusalem that is still being executed. In almost every nation under the sun hosts are bowing the knee at the name of Jesus. More and more are the peoples of the world becoming conscious of the freedom, the peace, the power, and the joy that lie in the Gospel of the Saviour. From the East and the West, the North and the South men are coming to share with Abraham and Isaac and the saints in glory that inheritance which is theirs in Christ Jesus.

And the flow of the Gospel tides shall be not only universal, but with ease. How slowly but how surely, how grandly but how irresistibly and how readily the vast ocean rises into and fills the creeks, the bays, the channels and the great highways of the waters. The mighty tide sweeps onward, surrounds, environs, swallows and submerges every resisting obstacle, until at last there is only one broad stretch of conquering waters. Thus the Gospel goes on from generation to generation, the tide rising ever higher, becoming ever broader, growing ever grander, until

at last Christ and His salvation will conquer and submerge the whole earth in their glory.

There is only one more word in the text. It is the practical word, however. It is the word knowledge. A knowledge of the Cross and Its glory, of Christ and His glory, of salvation, righteousness and love and their glory, must be carried by us into all parts of the race. Into the dark spots at home, into the dark nations in foreign lands—into all the world it must go. This is missions. Epiphany is glory, the knowledge thereof is missions. Epiphany and missions go hand in hand. You and I have a part in preparing for this universal victory. You and I are to carry a knowledge of the glory of God everywhere. Every Christian in the world, is a missionary, a light of the world shining into the darkness. A Church that does no mission work is dead. It deserves to be wiped from the map.

"Today the nations bear no trace
Of all God's glory so long foretold;
The cannon speaks in the Preacher's place,
The age is weary with war and gold;
And high hopes wither and memories wane;
On hearths and altars God's fires are dead;
But no brave faith hath lived in vain
And brave hearts still cling to
what the prophet said."

The forge fires of Lebanon make nuts and bolts and rails and boilers, and buoys that go to all parts of the earth. The Christians of Lebanon must send their r[illegible] and let their lights shine over a radius just as wide [illegible]'est the glory of the Lord. This is our battle. Thes[illegible] our objectives. This is our cause. How shall we f[illegible] it? In three ways:

1. First let us take enlarged views of o[illegible] ork. We are engaged in a universal conquest. Our [illegible]t is not a local and a simple one. It is world wide in [illegible]pe, com-

plex in its demands and difficulties. And O how much remains to be done! The black waters and evil tide of the devil are still running in our schools, our homes, our hearts, our politics, and even in our churches and public movements for reform. Worldliness, love of amusement, of dress, of folly of all kinds are everywhere about us and within us. Let us apply God's Word to ourselves in all sincerity and diligence. Let us go to church as regularly as possible. Let us pray and work as we have never done before.

2. And abroad, what an example of war and speculation and evil Christianity is giving to the heathen of the earth! We must put more power into missions—yea, even more than into munitions and shells. We must send the preacher, the hospital, and the Gospel, as well as our armies across the waters. We must strengthen the hands of our Church in foreign lands by our gifts of love and gratitude. We Americans must plant the Cross of Christ and uphold it where Europe can do nothing now. The burden of India and China is upon us. It is an endless, perplexing, and universal work; and our church, our town, yes, you and I must do our part to keep it moving onward.

3. Third, and last, we must take comfort from the large purposes of God. We must not grow discouraged. We must as the apostle counsels, "Have faith in God." His cause will finally and universally prevail even as the waters of the sea do cover the earth. His plans are great, but His glorious promises are as great as His counsels, and His resources as His promises. The process of filling the earth with the knowledge of the Lord may seem to be tedious and hopeless; the obstacles, multitudinous; but it is not endless. Many church members are apparently on a strike, many others seem to be sleeping. God's army is not

all alive. But God's power, God's pillar of cloud and fire, God's prophets and God's prophecies, God's Son, God's Redemption, God's mighty Spirit, God's Will and Love are still here in the same measure as they were of old and they must and shall prevail.

"O Spirit of the living God
In all Thy plentitude of grace
Where'er the foot of man hath trod
Descend on our apostate race.

Be darkness at Thy coming Light,
Confusion, order, in Thy path.
Souls without strength inspire with might
Bid mercy triumph over wrath.

Baptize the nations: far and wide
The triumphs of the Cross record;
The Name of Jesus glorify
Till every kindred call Him Lord."

Amen.

W. B. C.

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